

The Universality of National Socialism (The Mistaken Category of 'Fascism')

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For more than 70 years (since about 1931) the word and the designation of 'Fascist' has been misused. Fascism was, and remains, an Italian and not a universal phenomenon – unlike national socialism which was, and remains, much more universal than we have been accustomed to think, and of which German National Socialism was but one, alarmingly powerful, manifestation. In Europe, at least between 1935 and 1945, National Socialism diminished and eventually absorbed Fascism. Throughout the world, including Russia and the United States, the relationships of nationalism and socialism explain much of the history of politics and of their movements during more than a century.

I

The adjective, or category, of 'fascist' is still often, and widely, used throughout the world: (a) applied to certain 'right-wing' dictatorships; (b) applied to most, or all 'right-wing' dictatorships or political parties, including Hitler's Third Reich, during the 1920–45 period; (c) applied, on occasion, to manifestations of all kinds of authoritarian practices or inclinations. This is wrong; but the purpose of this essay is not merely corrective. Its argument is not semantic but historical.

Fascism was largely an Italian phenomenon. Nationalist socialism was more universal. The origins of fascism were definitely Italian. Those of National Socialism were not purely German. We know that the first prominent appearance of '*fasci*' as a political grouping arose among agricultural workers in Sicily around 1892. The first appearance of parties named National Socialist arose in German-speaking Bohemia and Moravia a few years later, whereby it might be argued that fascism preceded National Socialism. This argument is insufficient. Except for the word, the Sicilian '*fasci*' of the 1890s had nothing to do with Mussolini's '*fasci*' in 1919 and after. Either in its origins or in its development German National Socialism was not fascist, whereas eventually Italian Fascism became more and more National Socialist. I shall return to this development in this essay, but

before that a word or so about the origin of the overall usage of the 'fascist' term in the 1930s and thereafter, the history of ideas (indeed, of all human thought) being essentially the history of words.

Some time around 1931–32 the usage of the term 'National Socialist' was proscribed in Soviet Russia, presumably on the orders of Stalin (this is an important topic that researchers reading Russian might usefully pursue, verify and complete). After that date, Russian reference to Hitler or to National Socialists or to the Third Reich was always to 'fascists' or 'Hitlerites'. In western Europe and in the United States this terminology was instantly, and eagerly, adopted by many journalists and political commentators and even political thinkers and some historians – wrongly so. It was the only permissible term employed by all communists, regimes as well as intellectuals, in the Soviet-dominated nations of eastern Europe.

Stalin had good reasons to insist on this kind of terminology. National, instead of 'international' socialism was more and more applicable to Stalin's Russia in the 1930s, whence it was best to avoid the usage of such a term. At the same time the overall application of 'fascism' to all right-wing, and strongly anti-communist, parties and practices and phenomena was very useful for international communist and left-wing rhetoric and practice.

It is regrettable that long after the demise of Mussolini's Fascism and of Hitler's National Socialism, and long after historians' recognition of the not inconsiderable differences between them, not only leftist political thinkers and writers but historians, too, found it proper to employ the overall term of 'fascist' as a common denominator in the senses described in the first paragraph of this essay.¹ A principal example of this was the German historian Ernst Nolte's massive book *Three Faces of Fascism* (1963; 1966), in which he attempted a near-encyclopedic description of three nationalist right-wing movements, the French *Action Française*, Italian Fascism and German National Socialism. This book received nearly unanimous approval,² even though its thematic concept was entirely wrong. Apart from the sometimes fundamental differences between these three ideologies, Nolte's concept was at least chronologically, that is, historically, incorrect, since the *Action Française* was essentially a *pre-fascist*, while Hitler's Third Reich (especially in its later years) was essentially a *post-fascist* phenomenon – not to speak of the condition that it was the third of these, National Socialism, that eventually had the largest influence on the others and attracted many followers of the other two.

II

Of course there were similarities – and reciprocal influences – between fascism and National Socialism. The rise, and the popular appeal, of both was part and parcel of a general reaction against the inefficiencies and the corruptions and the hypocrisies and the materialistic philosophies of parliamentarism and liberalism on the one hand, and against communism on the other. In this sense (but only in this sense) the establishment of fascism in Italy corresponded to the general advance toward authoritarian rule and retreat from liberal government that wholly, or partly, replaced multi-party parliamentary governments all over central, eastern and southern Europe (and central and southern America) in the 1920s and early 1930s (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Rumania, Albania, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Austria, Greece, Portugal and so on).³

This was, and surely seemed to have been, such a general and worldwide development that in 1930, for a book written by an Austrian (Otto Forst de Battaglia) entitled *Dictatorship on Trial*, Winston Churchill wrote an introduction, musing whether this kind of authoritarianism, while not applicable to the traditional English-speaking democracies, may not be the wave of the future. About this Adolf Hitler had no doubts – except that authoritarianism was not what *he* had in mind.

In any event: there have been political thinkers and would-be philosophers and authors and even heads of state who recognised not only the differences between authoritarianism and totalitarianism, but also that Italian Fascism (and Mussolini) was authoritarian, whereas National Socialism and Communism (Hitler and Stalin) were totalitarian. However, as Samuel Johnson said, 'definitions are tricks for pedants'. There were, of course, differences between Fascism and National Socialism, as between Italians and Germans, as between Mussolini and Hitler. These differences were national and civilisational and personal, not scientific or theoretical. Again it is history, not theory, that makes them apparent. The relationship between Fascism and National Socialism, between Italy and Germany, between Mussolini and Hitler, had its ups and downs. The low point was 1934 when Mussolini made political (and a few military) gestures to oppose an eventually abortive Nazi coup in Austria (in essence supporting Austrian 'fascism' against National Socialism), and when Mussolini himself was supposed to have made a few scathing

statements against the racist ideas of German National Socialism. Yet even that was neither unequivocal nor definite. Hitler and Mussolini had met a few weeks before that Austrian crisis of July 1934, and their meeting, while inconclusive, was not a failure. Within Italy there were bitter newspaper debates between at least two different fascist organs, one anti-German and anti-racist, the other pro-National Socialist and anti-Semitic. The 1934 crisis (if that was what it was) between fascist Italy and National Socialist Germany was a glitch, not a break. Very soon it was surpassed, because Mussolini was inclined to see much of the contemporary tendency of Europe as had Hitler, essentially in the light of which both of them were convinced, though in different ways: the decay of the democracies of western Europe, and the consequent weakness of France and Britain (about the latter Mussolini was even more convinced than was Hitler).

There is, however, one important theoretical difference between the political thinking of Mussolini and Hitler, a distinction with consequences. Mussolini believed in the primary importance of the state. The state had to be strengthened, against the endemic individualism of the Italians. In the fascist manifesto of 1932 Mussolini proclaimed: 'It is not the people who make the state but the state that makes the people.' He tried to institutionalise and enforce the submission of the individual to the state, harking back, at least in some ways, to the ideal of the state at the Italian Renaissance. But Hitler had already written in *Mein Kampf* that 'the state is but a means to an end'. And in 1929: 'For us the idea of the *Volk* is higher than the ideas of the state.' In 1933: 'Religions are more stable than forms of states.' In 1938: 'In the beginning was the *Volk*, and only then came the Reich.' In 1944: 'The state is only an enforced framework' [*eine Zwangsform*]. In 1934, at Nuremberg: 'Foreigners may say that the state created us. No! We are "The State". We follow the orders of no earthly power but those of God who created the German people! On us depends the state!'²⁴

And before a further, and necessarily brief, analysis of the Mussolini–Hitler relationship, one additional observation about the fascism–National Socialism relationship, in time and place. In western Europe the height of the attraction and of the intellectual respect for fascism occurred in the early 1930s. Thereafter it either ebbed (as in Britain and Ireland, for example), or it began to transform itself more and more into a germanophile or National Socialist direction (as for example among the Rexists in Belgium). In

Austria the popular dislike of many Austrians for Italy led to the condition that few Austrians were pro-fascist, while many more of them were pro-German *and* National Socialist. In eastern Europe the populist extreme Right was Nationalist Socialist and not fascist, with practically no exceptions, a tendency in which anti-Semitism played a definite part. In France the Right⁵ was anglophobe and italophile (and also hispanophile, after the victory of Franco). Spanish *Falangism* was a more complex phenomenon: it had both fascist and National Socialist elements, in a particularly Spanish way. In Norway (and Holland and elsewhere, for example Argentina) National Socialist sympathisers were anglophobes and germanophiles. In any event – and well before Mussolini's decision to align himself definitely with Hitler – fascism had fewer and fewer admirers and followers across Europe and the world, while those of National Socialism and Germany were increasing. All of this happened during a time when the 'fascist' word was not simply bandied about but universally employed, not only by Russians and communists but also by all kinds of leftists and liberals throughout the world.

After 1945 the survival of fascist and National Socialist sympathisers did not essentially alter this phenomenon. It is National Socialism and not fascism, it is the Third Reich and not Mussolini's Italy that evokes the respective interest and admiration of such people. In Italy itself, where a neo-fascist party has had a now respectably long history, at least since 1948, the main identification and the ideology of this party and of its adherents is with Mussolini's Italian Social Republic after 1943, rather than with Mussolini's regime of the late 1920s and early 1930s. The name was the MSI, the Italian Social Movement; it extols Mussolini's decision to have entered the Second World War and, at least indirectly, his alliance with Hitler's Third Reich. Le Pen's *Front National* in France has nothing to do with fascism: it is nationalist, anglophobe and occasionally anti-Semitic, with tendencies of anti-Gaullist germanophilia, harking backing to the Second World War. Haider's party in Austria shows such tendencies, too (it may be telling that Haider once described Winston Churchill as 'a war criminal') – in any case, it has nothing to do with fascism.

III

It is senseless to analyse the history of fascism and of National Socialism apart from Mussolini and Hitler. (At the same time there are

German historians – such as Klaus Hildebrand – who have written that there was no National Socialism, there was only Hitlerism. Absolute nonsense.) In one respect Mussolini preceded Hitler. In 1919 Mussolini invented fascism and founded his party, whereas Hitler did not invent National Socialism, and in 1919 entered the ranks of a small National Socialist party, though he would soon become its principal personage and leader. Yet, more significantly, Mussolini's own nationalist socialism preceded his 'fascism' by at least eight years. Around 1911, at the time of the Libyan War, Mussolini realised that, yes, he was a socialist: but a *nationalist* socialist, rather than an internationalist one. That marked his career – and the history of Italy, indeed, of Europe – afterward. There followed his famous breakaway from the Italian Socialist Party in the autumn of 1914. That event, too, was a consequence not only of the young Mussolini's earlier conversion to nationalism, but of the fact that when the First World War broke out international socialism (indeed, Marx's basic dogma of the class struggle being infinitely more fundamental than the struggles of nations; indeed, the entire idea of Economic Man), sizzled and melted away in the heat of nationalist emotions like a pat of cold margarine in a hot skillet – in many European countries. In sum, in the history of international socialism 1914 was a big setback; in the history of national socialism it was not.

Dozens of books and articles exist about the relationship of Mussolini and Hitler. Some of them are interesting, especially since they must include the different personal characteristics of these two dictators. That, however, is not within the province of this essay. What belongs here is a brief summary of the change of their reciprocal situation in 1938. Before that, Hitler admired and respected Mussolini more than Mussolini respected and admired Hitler. Mussolini was seven years older than Hitler; he came to power 11 years before Hitler; he was successful and respected throughout the world. Had it not been for Mussolini, had Italy been governed by a liberal-parliamentary government, it is questionable whether Hitler, in *Mein Kampf* and thereafter, would have proposed a German alignment with Italy and that Germandom, including Austria, should accept the Italian incorporation of German-speaking South Tyrol.

Mussolini's Italian example also had something to do with Hitler's decision to come to power not against, but with the help of conservatives. Also, Hitler recognised Mussolini's fascist modernity.⁶ But in 1938 all of this changed. Before that, Mussolini had been the

senior partner in their relationship; in 1938 and thereafter it was Hitler. This had, of course, much to do with the change in the political geography of central Europe and with the awesome rise of German power. But there was another element too. During his triumphant visit to Rome in May 1938 Hitler was deeply disillusioned, indeed disgusted, by much of what he saw. Italy was, after all, a diarchy: Mussolini ruled with the consent of, indeed together with, the King. The impression of the bejeweled and corrupt and fashionable royalty and aristocracy at the Rome receptions upset Hitler. 'Fascism is only a half-job', he was supposed to have said earlier. What is not a supposition is there in his repeated statements excoriating monarchy during and after his return from Rome (among other things, he privately praised the German Social Democratic leaders for having gotten rid of the Hohenzollern monarchy in 1918 and ordered a raise in their pensions). In any event, it was not only that Hitler and Germany were now more powerful than Mussolini and Italy: the latter had to accommodate himself and his country to the former. This was evident not only in international politics but in Mussolini's decision to adopt racism, anti-Semitism and other German-inspired measures for Italy (including the imitation of the German parade march, the goose-step).⁷ From then on, with few minor deviations along the path, Mussolini went downhill, in the end entirely dependent on and even subservient to Hitler.

But this was, again, part and parcel of a larger – and deeper – phenomenon. After 1938 it was not only that Italy became subservient to Germany and Mussolini to Hitler: fascism had become absorbed by and subservient to National Socialism, nearly everywhere. Even before 1938 there were many fascists who became National Socialists; but there were no National Socialists who had become fascists. The culmination of this was the collapse of the Italian diarchy in 1943, when not only the King but many important fascists (and not all of them because of sheer opportunism) turned against National Socialism, against Italy's alliance with Germany, and even against Mussolini. Mussolini was arrested and then rescued by Hitler. The result was the formation of the Italian Social Republic in the north, under German tutelage. In the end Mussolini himself returned to his radical socialist and original republican convictions. A few days before his flight and execution he turned to one of his followers, and said, 'If you had a choice what would it be: Italy a British colony, or a Soviet republic? I'd choose the latter'.⁸ This was

useless rhetoric, its preferences sounding much like those of Goebbels; it was, however, a symptomatic indication of Mussolini's hatreds and fears.

IV

One theme of this essay is the power and the attractions of National Socialism. Now the best measure of the reciprocal influences of peoples and of institutions and also of ideas on one another is that of their development. This is applicable to the three great dictators during the second quarter of the twentieth century. We have seen that Hitler's influence on Mussolini and the influence of National Socialism on fascism was steadily growing, to the point where the influences of the latter became nil. The reciprocal influences of communism and fascism, and of Mussolini and Stalin were minimal (except that in the 1920s and 1930s more communists had become fascists than the reverse). But the influence of Hitler on Stalin, and of National Socialism on communism, was very considerable. Hitler respected and even admired Stalin, and there is ample evidence of Stalin's respect for Hitler too.⁹ What is relevant to our argument is not so much Stalin's respect for German power, as his appreciation for the ideas and institutions that Hitler represented and incarnated. This is not the place to list the evidences and the evolution of clandestine Nazi-Soviet relations before their pact in 1939, or for a comparison of German and Soviet police rule, including the practices of their concentration camps. What belongs here is the obvious development of Stalin's nationalism, to which his expulsion of Trotsky and his liquidation of many of the internationalist communists in the purges of the 1930s belong. We must also recognise that Stalin's termination of the Comintern in 1943, his substitution of a Soviet national anthem for the 'Internationale' around the same time, his adoption of nationalist themes, his restoration of traditional Russian symbols, his support for the Russian Orthodox hierarchy and so on, were not tricks to mislead or impress his allies, and not altogether opportunist measures to increase his support from the masses of Russians, but genuine examples of his increasingly nationalist ideology, including his anti-Semitism and his suspicion of internationalists. Terminologically at least it would be nonsense to call Hitler a communist or a fascist, or Mussolini a communist, or Stalin a fascist: but at least in a broad sense the nationalist socialist category, or appellation, is applicable to all three of them.

In 1945 Stalin survived Hitler. To many intellectuals it seemed that communism was the wave of the future. But were Stalin's ideas ahead of Hitler's? He felt constrained to depend on the installation of communists in his new satellite empire, many of them people whom he despised, while he thought that they were the only ones who would unreservedly obey him. This had not been so with Hitler. Moreover *the state*, originally anathema not only to Marx but also to Lenin, had become sacrosanct in Stalin's Soviet Union by 1939, in official terminology as well as in reality. (It may even be argued that Stalin's 1936-39 purges signified in large part the transformation of a party bureaucracy into a state bureaucracy.) Thus Stalin discovered the supreme importance of the state at the very time when Hitler found that supreme importance outdated: another example of the backwardness of Stalin's communism compared with Hitler's National Socialism. Finally, while both of the terms 'dictatorship' and 'totalitarianism' are applicable to Stalin's and to other communist tyrannies, they are not entirely applicable to Hitler's Third Reich and to National Socialism.¹⁰ Hitler himself said on one occasion that he was not a dictator: 'Every South American popinjay can be a dictator'. He was something more frightening, and more powerful, than a tyrant: the establishment of his tyranny depended on his support by a majority. 'To suggest that Hitler's power rested on "totalitarian terror" – leaving aside difficulties with the concept of "totalitarian" – is to state only a partial truth.'¹¹

V

Let me now broaden the scope of my argument. During the quarter-century 1920-45, including the Second World War, there were three large forces throughout the world. There was parliamentary democracy, incarnated mostly by the English-speaking nations and the democracies of western and northern Europe. There was communism, represented and incarnated by the Soviet Union. There were National Socialism and fascism, incarnated and represented by the German Third Reich and by Mussolini's Italy. During the Second World War the latter of the three collapsed. Yet, despite their overwhelming manpower and industrial might, neither Soviet Russia nor the English-speaking democracies could have conquered National Socialist Germany by themselves. The gigantic and, in many ways, strange alliance of the United States, the British empire and Soviet Russia were needed to accomplish that.

The military strength and organisation of the German armed forces are not sufficient explanations for this astonishing historical condition. In a way the Second World War was a continuation of the First: both of them representing the last attempt of a European power, in that case Germany, to dominate most of the continent. But only in a way: for, had it not been for Hitler and for his National Socialism, there would have been no Second World War, surely not in 1939. Moreover, unlike during the First World War, this configuration of a worldwide struggle repeated itself within almost every country. There were communist minorities in many countries, even though nowhere were they capable of coming to power either by revolution or with sufficient popular support; until 1945 the Soviet Union remained the only communist-ruled country on the globe.¹² There were National Socialist (and, for a while, fascist) sympathisers – and, on occasion, near-majorities – in many countries. Finally, there were anti-German and anti-fascist and, later, anti-Communist sympathisers of the western democracies throughout the world: on occasion their conflicts with their opponents erupted in civil wars. These sympathies and antipathies were of course not always separable from the sympathies and antipathies evoked by the protagonist nations who represented one or another of these worldwide forces: anglophilia and anglophobia, germanophilia and germanophobia were powerful inclinations in many places, as were russophilia on occasion, and russophobia on many other occasions. The universality of this triangular division appeared well beyond Europe: for example in China, where at least from 1940 to 1945 three forces struggled with one another: Chiang Kai-Shek's *Kuomintang*, allied with and dependent on the English-speaking democracies; Mao Tse-Tung's communists, allied with and dependent on the Soviet Union; and Wang Ching-Wei's nationalists, allied with and dependent on Japan.

However, neither the purpose nor the scope of this essay comprise an historical synthesis of the period 1920–45. And, at least in one respect, I must qualify the above generalisation of the triad of the then great forces of the world. There was a fourth, disassociated group of states and governments that could not be qualified as either communist or National Socialist or liberal-democratic. There was a diversity of anti-communist and anti-liberal, sometimes semi-parliamentary governments, ranging in the late 1930s from South American dictatorships to Portugal or Franco's Spain or Greece or

the Baltic republics or Austria, Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria, Turkey and so on. They did not have any attraction beyond their frontiers, and often not even to the majority of the people within them. They may be lumped together under the considerably inaccurate, but still partly useful adjective of authoritarian – as indeed it is at least arguable that before 1938 Italian fascism was authoritarian rather than totalitarian (Mussolini's 'totalitarian' declamatory rhetoric notwithstanding). Yet many of them – their governments as well as their peoples – resisted Germany or Italy or both during the Second World War; Metaxas's Greece having been one shining example, but there were others, too, ranging from the cautiously but determinedly pro-British policies of Salazar's otherwise neutral but surely authoritarian Portugal, to the numerous Central and South American dictatorships or semi-dictatorships that followed the lead of the United States in 1940–41 and after. This is yet another reason why the communist, leftist and Russian usage of 'fascist' and 'fascism' was, and remains, not only woefully inaccurate but entirely and historically senseless.

VI

The historical argument that National Socialism was more universal and more powerful and more enduring than was fascism has been set forth in the preceding pages. But there remains a problem which is terminological. This is that German, or German-inspired National Socialism, its ideology and its institutions and its phenomena, were not necessarily identical with other national socialisms, and surely not with different variations of socialist governments in various nations. However, the historical emergence and eventual confluence of modern nationalism and socialism require a necessarily abbreviated and generalised summary.

After about 1870 the classic nineteenth-century debate and dichotomy between conservatives and liberals began to fade, for the main reason that many of their political and social advocacies had begun to overlap. Yet what followed was not a Hegelian synthesis but the appearance of two new forces: nationalism and socialism. That essentially new, and populist, nationalism differed from the older (at times aristocratic, at times liberal-democratic) patriotism, while socialism, too, began to differ from the visions and the categories of Marx or of Saint-Simon ('nation', for example, almost never figures

in Marx: he overlooked its tremendous power, confusing it with 'the state'). But an elaboration of this does not belong within the scope of this essay. What belongs here is the recognition that nationalism and socialism – their variations and their combinations – turned out to be the principal and dominant political phenomena of the twentieth century.

During the twentieth century the vast majority of the states of the world adopted many of the practices of the so-called welfare, or provider, state. In 1894 the English liberal Sir William Harcourt exclaimed, at the occasion of some item of domestic legislation in the House of Commons: 'We are all Socialists now!' Yes we are – in one way or another. Yet we are not Internationalists, at least not in the original socialist sense of that word. What we find across the globe are different variations of national – though not necessarily nationalist – socialist institutions. There is a difference between *national* and *nationalist*. Hitler's National Socialism was definitely the latter. It is not only that he and his National Socialists saw every kind of internationalism, very much including international socialism but also international capitalism, as their enemies. Hitler's nationalism proved to be a more important instrument of his people's unity than the various social institutions and programmes of the Third Reich. He was supposed to have said in the early 1930s: 'Why should I nationalise the industries? I will nationalise the people' – which is what he did. In this respect the popular usage of the word 'Nazi' is telling. Originally some of the smaller National Socialist parties and groups in Germany were called 'die Nazi-Sozi'. Soon this compound usage disappeared: they were simply called 'Nazi'. Rightly so: the 'Nazi' (nationalist) element was more important than the 'Sozi' (socialist).¹³

This primacy of nationalism in the different mixtures of nationalism and socialism survived Mussolini and Hitler. Less than six months after their deaths, an ideologically nationalist-socialist regime came to power in Argentina, led by Perón; and toward the end of the sordid self-liquidation of 'international' communism (international in hardly more than a name), the last communist tyrants discovered, and for a time successfully used, the appeals of nationalism. Ceaușescu in Romania and Milosevic in Serbia (and also others of their kind) were nationalist communists, again with the definite emphasis on the first of the two categories. By the end of the twentieth century they too had disappeared. And yet the question

may be raised: while Stalin survived Mussolini and Hitler, will the remnant appeal of communism survive the historical, or nostalgic, appeals of fascism (in Italy) and of national socialisms (not only in Germany and Austria but elsewhere in the world)?

VII

There remains one important additional consideration of all of the above. This involves the history of the United States.

During the historical (1815–1914) nineteenth century both the history and the political structures of the United States and of Europe differed greatly. The main events in the history of Europe were the revolutions of the 1820s, 1830s and 1848, and thereafter the unifications of Italy and of Germany. In the history of the United States they were the westward movement, the Civil War and mass immigration. In Europe the political history of that century was marked by the debate between conservatism and liberalism. In the United States there was no conservative party or movement. During the twentieth century these divergences ceased to exist. Both for Europe and the United States the two great mountain ranges that characterised the century were the two world wars, and then the so-called 'cold war' which was a consequence of the Second World War. Moreover, after 1955, for the first time a self-designated 'conservative' (my quotation-marks are not incidental) movement emerged in the United States – and a quarter of a century later more Americans identified themselves as 'conservatives' than as 'liberals.' But this was only part and parcel of a wider and deeper development, obscured though it has been by the traditional terminology of American politics. As in Europe, and also as elsewhere in the world, the predominance of nationalism and socialism has governed American politics during the entire century. We need not illustrate how, save for some details, the welfare institutions and practices of American government do not essentially differ from those of other democratic and so-called 'advanced' nations; and that, all political rhetoric notwithstanding, these measures are accepted by the great majority of the American people and also by their two large political parties. But what is properly applicable to them is the worldwide reality and the terminology of the great political forces of the century, with this important difference of emphasis: while the Republicans tend to be more nationalist than socialist, the Democrats tend to be

more socialist than nationalist. This has been so for 80 years at least. Some time in the future it may change: but not yet.

Moreover, the United States, too, has not been immune to the secondary great development that we sketched earlier: to the stronger appeal of nationalism than of socialism. This, too, has been a worldwide phenomenon. One of its basic symptoms has been that during the twentieth century the once dogmatically democratic appeal to 'The People', has ceased to be a monopoly of the Left. An early symptom of this appeared in Germany (and, even more, in Austria) as early as in the 1880s when *Volk* and *völkisch* appealed to, and eventually meant, a populist and xenophobic and anti-Semitic nationalism.¹⁴ The emergence and the evolution of American populism, while *sui generis* in other respects, was not entirely dissimilar. Indeed, the original concurrence and later divergence of nationalism and socialism is detectable within the United States in the comparative history of progressives and populists, even more than in a comparison of Republicans and Democrats. The original social composition of the early progressives and populists was of course quite different: but for a while both of them championed and struggled for long overdue social reforms. However, by the 1930s they sharply diverged: most of the remaining progressives became internationalists, while most of the populists were nationalists. Indeed, it may be argued (and the United States is but one example of this widespread phenomenon) that, more than often, populism is nationalist socialism – essentially, and not merely by definition.

While populists remain opponents of international capitalism, they have become less and less inimical to nationalist capitalists or to nationalist billionaires. But of course what are still called 'capitalism' and 'capitalist' in 2000 are something entirely different from capitalism and capitalists in the nineteenth century. A good thorough cleansing of the basic language of economics is even more overdue than a rethinking of certain accepted categories of politics. But that is another story.

NOTES

1. This tendency varies from country to country.
2. Except perhaps for this writer. See the review of Nolte's book in John Lukacs, *The Catholic Historical Review* LIV/3 (October 1968), p.521; later, in idem, *The Hitler of History* (New York: Knopf, 1997), p.33.
3. One chronological exception – in the twentieth as well as in the nineteenth century Spanish clocks struck different – was Spain, where the authoritarian dictatorship of

Primo da Rivera collapsed in 1930 and was followed by the abolition of the Spanish monarchy in 1931. On that occasion Mussolini remarked that to go back to a liberal republic in 1931 was going back to oil lamps in an age of electricity. He was right: the Second Republic of Spain after 1931 was but an episode between two, albeit different, dictatorships.

4. These, and other quotes, from Lukacs, *The Hitler of History* (note 2), pp.117–18.
5. We must consider, however, that in France, as also in many other nations, some of the most determined opponents of the Third Reich and of National Socialism were men of the 'Right' (for example, De Gaulle, Churchill and many others).
6. Hitler admired the modern character of Italian Fascism. This included Mussolini's interest in fast machines and automobiles, and the fact that the first superhighways (*autostrade*) were built in northern Italy after 1924, preceding Hitler's *Autobahnen* by ten years (on one occasion Hitler told Speer that the *Autobahnen* would be his Parthenon).
7. I could not ascertain when the Soviet Russian army (and, later, other eastern European armies) adopted the goose-step for their parade marching.
8. Cited in Ermanno Amicucci, *I 600 giorni di Mussolini* (Rome: Fato, 1948), p.312.
9. Alan Bullock, *Hitler and Stalin: Parallel Lives* (New York: Knopf, 1992), is deficient in this regard. It does not include the significant evidences of their relationship, their contacts and their statements about each other. Aleksandr Nekrich, *Pariahs, Partners, Predators* (New York: Columbia, 1997), largely does.
10. It is also instructive to notice that Hitler used the word 'total' not at all. Other National Socialists, especially Goebbels, often did. So did Mussolini: indeed, the word 'totalitarian' was first employed by the latter, as early as 1926 (of course this was not much more than a matter of his rhetoric).
11. Ian Kershaw, *Hitler: Profile in Power* (New York: Knopf, 1991), p.62, cited in Lukacs, *The Hitler of History* (note 2), p.116.
12. The exception (which proves the case ...) is the Soviet-dominated Outer Mongolia, contiguous to Siberia.
13. Hitler himself was not only more of a nationalist than a socialist; he was also more of an extreme nationalist than a racist. Cf. 'State; people; race; nation', in Lukacs, *The Hitler of History* (note 2), ch.4, pp.113–27.
14. 1914: Mussolini choosing the name *Popolo d'Italia* for his newspaper; a French pro-Fascist weekly in the 1930s was called *L'ami du peuple*, adopting Marat's 1791 title. There are many other such examples of 'populism' having become a 'Rightist' phenomenon during the twentieth century.