



## **Islamic Fascism 101** **On all they've done to earn the name.**

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Make no apologies for the use of "Islamic fascism." It is the perfect nomenclature for the agenda of radical Islam, for a variety of historical and scholarly reasons. That such usage also causes extreme embarrassment to both the Islamists themselves and their leftist "anti-fascist" appeasers in the West is just too bad.

First, the general idea of "fascism" — the creation of a centralized authoritarian state to enforce blanket obedience to a reactionary, all-encompassing ideology — fits well the aims of contemporary Islamism that openly demands implementation of sharia law and the return to a Pan-Islamic and theocratic caliphate.

In addition, Islamists, as is true of all fascists, privilege their own particu-

lar creed of true believers by harkening back to a lost, pristine past, in which the devout were once uncorrupted by modernism.

True, bin Laden's mythical *Volk* doesn't bath in the clear icy waters of the Rhine untouched by the filth of the Tiber; but rather they ride horses and slice the wind with their scimitars in service of a soon to be reborn majestic world of caliphs and mullahs. Osama bin Laden sashaying in his flowing robes is not all that different from the obese Herman Goering in reindeer horns plodding around his Karinhall castle with suspenders and alpine shorts.

Because fascism is born out of insecurity and the sense of failure, hatred for Jews is *de rigueur*. To read al

Qaeda's texts is to reenter the world of *Mein Kampf* (naturally now known as *jihadi* in the Arab world). The crackpot minister of its ideology, Dr. Zawahiri, is simply a Dr. Alfred Rosenberg come alive — a similar quarter-educated buffoon, who has just enough of a vocabulary to dress up fascist venom in a potpourri of historical misreadings and pseudo-learning.

Envy and false grievance, as in the past with Italian, German, or Japanese whining, are always imprinted deeply within the fascist mind. After all, it can never quite figure out why the morally pure, the politically zealous, the ever more obedient are losing out to corrupt and decadent democracies — where “mixing,” either in the racial or religious sense, should instead have enervated the people.

The “will” of the German people, like the “Banzai” spirit of the Japanese, should always trump the cowardly and debased material superiority of decadent Western democracies. So al Qaeda boasts that in Somalia and Afghanistan the unshakable creed of Islam overcame the richer and better equipped Americans and Russians. To read bin Laden's communiqués is to be reminded of old Admiral Yamamoto assuring his creepy peers that his years in the United States in the 1920s taught him that Roaring Twenties America, despite its fancy cars and skyscrapers, simply could not match the courage of the chosen Japanese.

Second, fascism thrives best in a

once proud, recently humbled, but now ascendant, people. They are ripe to be deluded into thinking contemporary setbacks were caused by others and are soon to be erased through ever more zealotry. What Versailles and reparations were to Hitler's new Germany, what Western colonialism and patronizing in the Pacific were to the rising sun of the Japanese, what the embarrassing image of the perennial sick man of Europe was to Mussolini's new Rome, so too Israel, modernism, and America's ubiquitous pop culture are to the Islamists, confident of a renaissance via vast petro-wealth.

Such reactionary fascism is complex because it marries the present's unhappiness with moping about a regal past — with glimpses of an even more regal future. Fascism is not quite the narcotic of the hopeless, but rather the opiate of the recently failed now on the supposed rebound who welcome the cheap fix of blaming others and bragging about their own iron will.

Third, while there is generic fascism, its variants naturally weave preexisting threads familiar to a culture at large. Hitler's brand cribbed together notions of German will, Aryanism, and the cult of the *Übermensch* from Hegel, Nietzsche, and Spengler, with ample Nordic folk romance found from Wagner to Tacitus's *Germania*.

Japanese militarism's racist creed, fanaticism, and sense of historical destiny were a motley synthesis of Bushido, Zen and Shinto Buddhism, emperor worship, and past samurai

legends. Mussolini's fasces, and the idea of an indomitable Caesarian *Duce* (or Roman *Dux*), were a pathetic attempt to resurrect imperial Rome. So too Islamic fascism draws on the Koran, the career of Saladin, and the tracts of Nasserites, Baathists, and Muslim Brotherhood pamphleteers.

Fourth, just as it was idle in the middle of World War II to speculate how many Germans, Japanese, or Italians really accepted the silly hatred of Hitler, Mussolini, or Tojo, so too it is a vain enterprise to worry over how many Muslims follow or support al Qaeda, or, in contrast, how many in the Middle East actively resist Islamists.

Most people have no ideology, but simply accommodate themselves to the prevailing sense of an agenda's success or failure. Just as there weren't more than a dozen vocal critics of Hitler after the *Wehrmacht* finished off France in six weeks in June of 1940, so too there wasn't a Nazi to be found in June 1945 when Berlin lay in rubble.

It doesn't matter whether Middle Easterners actually accept the tenets of bin Laden's worldview — not if they think he is on the ascendancy, can bring them a sense of restored pride, and humiliate the Jews and the West on the cheap. Bin Laden is no more eccentric or impotent than Hitler was in the late 1920s. Yet if he can claim that his martyrs forced the United States out of Afghanistan and Iraq, toppled a petrol sheikdom or two, and acquired its wealth and influence — or if he got his hands

on nuclear weapons and lorded it over appeasing Westerners — then he too, like the Fuhrer in the 1930s, will become untouchable. The same is true of Iran's president Ahmadi-nejad.

Fifth, fascism springs from untruth and embraces lying. Hitler had contempt for those who believed him after Czechoslovakia. He broke every agreement from Munich to the Soviet non-aggression pact. So did the Japanese, who were sending their fleet to Pearl Harbor even as they talked of a new diplomatic breakthrough.

Al-Zawahiri in his writings spends an inordinate amount of effort excusing al Qaeda's lies by referring to the Koranic notions of tactical dissimulation. We remember Arafat saying one thing in English and another in Arabic, and bin Laden denying responsibility for September 11 and then later boasting of it. Nothing a fascist says can be trusted, since all means are relegated to the ends of seeing their ideology reified. So too Islamic fascists, by any means necessary, will fib, and hedge for the cause of Islamism. Keep that in mind when considering Iran's protestations about its "peaceful" nuclear aims.

We can argue whether the present-day Islamic fascists have the military means comparable to what was had in the past by Nazis, Fascists, and militarists — I think a dirty bomb is worth the entire *Luftwaffe*, one nuclear missile all the striking power of the Japanese imperial Navy — but there should be no ar-

gument over who they are and what they want. They are fascists of an Islamic sort, pure and simple.

And the least we can do is to call them that: after all, they earned it.

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