

Militias Against Fascism

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There is general agreement within the militia movement that its unifying ideology is *constitutionalism*, and that its ideological adversary is *fascism*. This is true not only of the militia movement in the United States, but of militia movements around the world. However, if militias are to effectively fight fascism in all its forms, we must understand it, how it arises, and how easily it can infect those dedicated to its eradication.

The fascist impulse

While we saw fascism emerge as a formal ideology in Europe during the middle decades of the 20th century, its roots are as old as mankind. Although we associate it with worship of charismatic leaders or the state as a kind of god, with unquestioning obedience to authority, and with a propensity to brutality, genocide, and repression of dissent, we must also examine the need that it fills for those who fall prey to it, and the ways that even "nice" people can become the facilitators of Orwellian nightmares.

A common phrase used to describe those with fascistic tendencies is "control freak". This phrase shows a great deal of psychological insight on the part of those who use it appropriately. It indicates someone who feels driven to exercise more control over a situation than most normal persons think healthy or appropriate.

Outcomes matter to people. And we can have some influence over many of those outcomes. Much of human life consists of acquiring and exercising the influence to bring about desirable outcomes. Problems can arise, however, when people misjudge how much influence can be acquired, how much influence they actually have, and how to exercise such influence as they have in a way that is actually productive of desired outcomes. People often tend to either underestimate their influence, and thereby relieve themselves of responsibility for adverse outcomes, or to overestimate their influence, and engage in actions that cannot achieve the desired outcomes, sometimes continuing to do so long after their lack of influence becomes painfully obvious.

The former tendency is common among many ordinary people whom political activists and civic leaders decry as "apathetic". If this tendency is sufficiently widespread, it can provide a fertile ground for persons of the opposite tendency, who either take advantage of that apathy to carry out their programs unchecked, or who take advantage of the fear, rage and disorder to which the first type is susceptible when their apathy is finally overcome by the pressure of events, and they seek the refuge of obedience to some authority.

The misjudgement of how much influence one has or can acquire over events is, of course, driven by fear of losing influence or of not acquiring enough, and by ambition to either maintain

some current situation or to achieve some vision for the future. This is especially likely to arise if either the current situation is misperceived or unsustainable, or the future vision is either unattainable, or not really as desirable as thought by the visionaries. Either can induce their visionaries to adopt increasingly evil methods when lesser methods fail.

This misjudgement of future possibilities is the other side of the misjudgement of one's influence over events. Both are facilitated by fearful or wishful thinking.

In fairness it must be said that much of the progress that has occurred in human affairs has been the product of visionaries who rejected the common wisdom that their visions were unattainable. A constitutional republic that could actually work was once in this category. The instance of the United States provides an existence proof that while imperfect, such a political order is better than the attainable alternatives.

It is not always easy to discern whether a vision is attainable. One that may seem dangerously impractical may turn out to have been inspired with the advantage of hindsight. Therefore, although some visions of power may be inherently fascistic, it is his willingness to use any method to achieve his vision that characterizes the fascist mindset. "The end justifies the means" is the justification the fascist uses to answer his critics, while dismissing the reply that, while only the end *can* justify the means, it does not necessarily justify *any* means. There does seem to be a principle of human affairs that evil methods tend to ruin the best-intended outcomes.

Or, as it has been often said, "The war is not between Us and Them, but between Good and Evil, and when those who claim to represent Good adopt the ways of Evil, Evil wins."

The judgement concerning how far one must go to survive, so that the cause can survive and have a chance to win, is not an easy one. It is easy to misjudge one's own importance in the struggle. Clearly, if survival is really at stake, one may have to resort to dreadful measures. But there may be a price to pay that is not well understood at the time. Historically, most successes have come from those unwilling to compromise their moral principles. In the words of George Washington, "Let us raise a Standard to which the Wise and Honest can repair. The event is in the hands of God." Washington succeeded in large part precisely because he was not willing to adopt the evil ways of his adversaries, in war or in the debates in the press, the Continental Congress, and the Constitutional Convention.

Fascism in government and business

Almost every government is fertile ground for the emergence of fascism. But fascistic excesses need not be intentional or even conscious on the part of those in the highest echelons of government. There is no evidence that even Adolph Hitler, often thought to be the architect of the genocide of Jews and other "undesirables", ever issued an explicit order to round people up, put them in concentration camps, and then murder them. The best evidence is that he just casually suggested to subordinates that there was a "problem", and left it to them to figure out how to "solve" it, while distancing himself from the grim details. While it seems incredible to

think that he was not aware of what was going on, or that many other Germans were not as well, it was made easy for them not to think about it, and the atrocities mounted.

We can see the same pattern in criminal excesses in government and the private sector, where the rich and powerful will often indicate to their subordinates or agents that they want some result, or don't want some other result, but never explicitly say how their subordinates are to satisfy them, sometimes even saying, "I don't want to know how you did it."

This ability to distance themselves and maintain deniability, not only against criminal investigation but even self-examination, is important in understanding the ways the rich and powerful can be perceived as "nice people" who would never engage in any kind of criminal conspiracy against the people, while at the same time the "middle management" of the empires they head can become engaged in interlocking networks of criminal conspiracies that are remarkable in their brutality and that give rise to a "shadow government" that takes on a will and life of its own, perhaps even becoming a threat to the interests and intentions of their patrons.

The mission of the militias with respect to fascism in government and business, then, must include compelling the elites to confront their personal responsibility for the excesses they have facilitated.

Fascism in the general population

Among the general population, the common forms of fascism are linked to racism, sectarianism, nationalism, and other forms of intolerance, which are not themselves fascism, but tend to arise in the same individuals to meet the same psychological needs. Any tendency toward bigotry is a warning sign, which is why it is important to discourage or exclude such tendencies among people active in constitutional militias. Other warning signs are rhetorical incivility, a susceptibility to allow emotion to prevail over reason, posturing, and a lack of professionalism. Psychologically, fascism is a manifestation of emotional immaturity, to which persons of any age may be susceptible.

A particular problem arises when fascists among the population get organized, and perhaps become involved in paramilitary training. Although selected on ideological grounds, they may be mistaken for militias, or even misassociated with them by the propaganda apparatus of an Establishment which fears the dissidents who form true militias. It is common for fascistic elements in government or the Establishment to make use of these fascistic groups for their own purposes, such as infiltrating them, perpetrating terroristic incidents, and then using such incidents to expand its powers and to quell critics, while blaming the militias and using the incidents as an excuse to crack down on them.

What this means for militia organizers is not only that they must carefully avoid infiltration by fascists of all kinds, but must take an active role in suppressing them. If fascists break laws, that could mean the use of armed force, but force may just validate them. The best way is to ridicule

them, reform them, integrate them back into normal society, and turn them against their former unreformed associates.

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