

Fascism and Democracy

Dan Fefferman
May 1976



Words are the carrier of ideas. Thus, the way in which words are used, the connotations they develop and their very definitions bear significance in the worldwide struggle between Communism and freedom.

Words such as "radical," "progressive" and "liberation" for instance, have been seized by the Communists. Non-Communists have thus been placed in a defensive position. People who have a non-Marxist idea about the root of social problems have to be "moderates" instead of radicals. Those who like parliamentary change rather than revolution end up as "conservatives." If you want to liberate people from Communist oppression, you are immediately labeled a "fascist."

What Is Fascism?

Webster defines fascism as "a political philosophy, movement, or regime that exalts nation and race and stands for a centralized autocratic government headed by a dictatorial leader, severe economic and social regimentation, and forcible suppression of opposition."

Our greatest familiarity with fascism, of course, came through Hitler's Nazi movement and the German state under Nazism. Hitler created a regime which brutally subjugated all opposition, thoroughly regulated the economic and social life of its people, moved through the autocratic rule of one megalomaniacal person, and belligerently exalted the (German) nation and ("Aryan") race at the expense of other nations and people.

Japanese and Italian fascism manifested these same traits, though to a lesser degree than Hitler.

People who oppose Communism often run into the argument "Hitler was an anticommunist too, you know." True, Hitler's ideology was militantly anticommunist. He saw Communism as the creation of the detestable "Jewish mind" which sought to conquer the people of "superior blood."

In short, he opposed the right thing (Communism) but for the wrong reason (racism). And he created an evil as great or greater in opposing it.

But today's anticommunists and the nations which oppose Communism by and large are not fascists.

The United States

The United States today fails to meet the definition of fascism on every account. Its ideology is non-racist, and provides for equal treatment of all people regardless of race or color. In international relations, the U.S. does not perceive itself as innately superior in any moral or cultural sense. As a people, we do see advantages in our Judeo-Christian heritage; however, we have also recognized that these values can be spread only by education, not force. The U.S. does perceive itself as materially more advanced, but this is based on objective indications and is not under serious dispute.

The U.S. is also not a dictatorship. Traditionally, the U.S. has been run by a three-branch form of government in which the power of the presidency is easily checked and balanced by that of the Congress and the judiciary.

Furthermore, the United States exercises comparatively little economic or social regimentation. Incentives for increasing government control over the economy and society, moreover, usually come from the political "left" rather than the conservative "right." Compared to any fascist state, the United States economy and society is very liberally organized.

In terms of suppression of opposition, the United States is one of the most open societies in history. The only movements which are suppressed by the federal government are movements which do violence themselves. The degree of freedom of speech, press, assembly and movement in the United States is unprecedented for a major world power.

Thus, in no way can the United States be accused of being a fascist. But what about her allies?

The U.S. Allies

Though some U.S. allies are authoritarian in political style, or autocratic in government, none can be considered fascist. To be specific, neither Spain nor South Africa, nor South Korea nor Chile exalts itself as fascist regimes traditionally have done in preparation for aggression against another nation. (South Korea seeks reunification with the North after the nation was divided by the big powers after WW II.) Even nationalist China with the goal of victory over Communism and liberation of the mainland seeks only to regain the land which it once controlled.

Moreover, some of these nations possess regimented, state run economies. Quite the contrary, though some have carried out land reforms, all are conservative or moderate in economic philosophy and defend the principle of private enterprise.

This, of course, is not to defend the abuses of, for instance, South African apartheid or alleged torture in Chile. The point is to define what is fascist and what is not.

One very effective technique used by the Communists is to discredit and divide their opposition, and to make their chief opponents ineffective through lack of confidence. Thus, if we allow our anticommunist resolve to be weakened by spurious accusations of being soft on fascism, we have most an important battle in the ideological struggle, and the ideological struggle is the most significant battle of the period of detente.

The ironic thing is that every evil of which the Communists accuse the present-day "fascists," they are guilty of themselves, and to a greater degree.

There are some fascists around today. Some of them have succeeded in infiltrating well-intentioned anticommunist organizations and rendering them ineffective by forcing through extremist policies and doctrines. The fascist movement as a whole, however, is already dead. A few of its members are still moving, but its heart stopped long ago.

The Primary Threat

The primary threat to world freedom in the present age is Communism. The atheistic ruthless dictatorial philosophy of Marxism-Leninism is shared by all Communist powers, whether they are directly allied or not. Moreover, even in non-Communist countries, numerous well-organized Marxist-Leninist revolutionary groups are moving, forming a Fifth Column of unprecedented proportions. Discrediting of "anti-Communism" has successfully rendered many aware non-Communists ineffective in the face of a powerful Marxist ideological offensive.

In such a situation, education becomes a most powerful weapon.

To regain the initiative, we first need an understanding of our adversary, his goals, his worldview, his strategy and tactics, his strengths and his weaknesses.

Though many have lost faith that the American people will respond to such an educational offensive, the

time has actually never been better. Detente is now an issue, and the people are seeking answers to some fundamental questions on United States foreign policy: Can we trust the Russians? Do we need to oppose them more strenuously? Are we really in danger of becoming the No. 2 military power? What does Brezhnev mean when he keeps on saying that the ideological struggle will intensify during detente, and the Soviet Union will support wars of "national liberation?"

More than at any time in the last two decades, the American public is interested in finding out about Communism and its relevance to us as Americans. The educational offensive against Communism, therefore can make great strides forward in a short period.

In this context, however, a word of warning is appropriate: we must not fail to learn the lessons of history. In the early and mid-1950s, a "red scare" swept this nation. It was based on an oversimplified, superficial view of what Communism is all about. Moreover, irresponsible allegations were made against Communist sympathizers. The tactics of the anticommunist movement were thus easily discredited, and its own myths and ignorance about its enemy became its downfall.

The new movement for victory over Communism must be positively oriented. It must recognize the imperfections of American society, it must repudiate racism and all other forms of bigotry, its ideology must be able to create unity in the midst of diversity, and its people must strive for selflessness in their sacrificial mission.

Responsibilities of Freedom

The greatest power against tyranny is freedom. In our view, it was for this America was created. However, it is essential to recognize that with freedom comes responsibility; that there can be no true freedom without adherence to moral principle and law -- more than anything, it is essential that we recommit ourselves to the proposition of our founding fathers that freedom is an absolute, eternal and unchanging value -- "that all men are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights."

We must bring to America the understanding that our freedoms are a gift from God. The blessings -- spiritual and material -- which God gave to America are not for ourselves alone but for all mankind. Where freedom is threatened, America does have a responsibility to aid in the liberation of oppressed peoples. The greatest single threat to world freedom today is the atheistic, totalitarian ideology of Communism. America can pioneer the path to ideological victory through a rebirth of freedom and renewed determination to fulfill the responsibilities which freedom implies.