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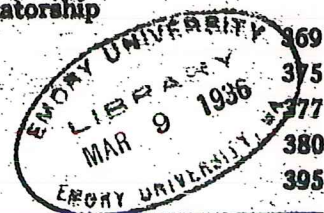
SOCIOLOGY AND SOCIAL RESEARCH

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SOCIAL OBJECTIVES OF FASCISM*

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IN ANY discussion of social objectives as exemplified in the contemporary authoritarian regimes of Western Europe, one is compelled immediately to consider the differences between the various forms of liberalism, communism or socialism, and Fascism. It may be suggested at the outset that socialism may be defined as that system of movements which would make the historically disadvantaged masses our rulers; that the liberals are those who believe in the rulership of the successful in human competition; and that the Fascists or, more broadly, the authoritarians, are those who would construct the new aristocracy or oligarchy, that is, the government of the best, if possible, but in any event the government of the few.

To the Fascist the difference between his regime and socialism or liberalism is not only that Fascism in attaining its social ends is a more healthful and sincere doctrine, but also that there is a significant difference in visibility. The papalistic caesarism of mass democracy, the tyranny of either the mass or its rulers, is veiled, like the veiled tyranny spoken of by that great medieval jurist, Bartolus of Sassoferrato. Fascism undertakes to lift the curtain, and to permit the people to enjoy a treat in social and economic realism. The Italian sociologists and political scientists, such as Vilfredo Pareto, Robert Michels, and Gaetano Mosca, have presented, respectively, the positivistic doctrines of the elite, the iron law of oligarchy, and the political class. Under Fascism there is, it is said, an elemental economy of social effort, since no time is lost by the rulers

* Digest of a paper read at the meeting of the Pacific Sociological Society at Mills College, December 27 and 28, 1935.

SOCIAL OBJECTIVES

in trying to persuade the citizen after all the governors of society organized in the National Fascist

a race, nor of a geographically defined race, perpetuating itself; a multitude with the will to live, the will to personality.¹

There is great conflict, however, between Fascism and liberalism. To the communist, the means of an economic system are off the logically necessary and moral. The primary social objective of the capitalist system. From this point of view the bourgeoisie are edged away from liberal beliefs, and in place of the principles of violence and suppression maintain themselves in power and to a veiling system as is possible. Political liberalism, sacrificed in order to preserve liberal economic order, in which is the central focus of interest.²

On the other hand, we have bourgeois interpretations of Fascism into two classes, including the Fascism as wholly evil and those in it the possibility of historic communist revolution is to be averted. Fascism condemn also communist reasons, that is, the destruction of a small group who, without them remain for long in power. The s

¹ Benito Mussolini, *Fascism: Doctrine and Its*. See also *International Conciliation*, No. 306 (1935).

² See R. P. Dutt, *Fascism and Social Reform*. See also E. H. Carr, *The Coming Struggle for Power* (New York, 1934).

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in trying to persuade the citizen body that they are not
after all the governors of society. The political elite, as
organized in the National Fascist party, is the leader not of

a race, nor of a geographically defined region, but a people, histori-
cally perpetuating itself; a multitude united by an idea and imbued
with the will to live, the will to power, [and to] self-conscious
personality.¹

There is great conflict, however, as to the meaning of
Fascism. To the communist, the Fascist regime is merely
a means of an economic system of exploitation to ward
off the logically necessary and morally justified revolution.
The primary social objective of Fascism is to preserve the
capitalist system. From this point of view, the leaders of
the bourgeoisie are edged away from their universalist and
liberal beliefs, and in place of these conceptions the princi-
ples of violence and suppression are used in order to sus-
tain themselves in power and to salvage such of the pre-
vailing system as is possible. Political liberalism is, in this
view, sacrificed in order to preserve some remnants of the
liberal economic order, in which of course private property
is the central focus of interest.²

On the other hand, we have what may be called the
bourgeois interpretations of Fascism. These may be divided
into two classes, including those thinkers who regard
Fascism as wholly evil and those who are willing to see
in it the possibility of historical necessity if the com-
munist revolution is to be averted. Those who condemn
Fascism condemn also communism for much the same
reasons, that is, the destruction of liberty and the tyranny
of a small group who, without their despotism, could not
remain for long in power. The second group of bourgeois

¹ Benito Mussolini, *Fascism: Doctrine and Institutions* (Rome, 1935), pp. 25, 12.
See also *International Conciliation*, No. 306 (1935), p. 12.

² See R. P. Dutt, *Fascism and Social Revolution* (New York, 1934); John
Strachey, *The Coming Struggle for Power* (New York, 1933), Ch. XIV.

interpreters admit that the first objectives of Fascism concern the development through future history of the continuity and tradition of the nation as it has been created in the past.

One of the foremost issues in the analysis of Fascist social objectives is the character of the nation. In the doctrine under consideration the nation is an organism. With Rousseau it may be called a moral and corporate body. But is the nation an organism because of the social ends attributed to it, or are social ends derived from the rather primitive fact of the nation as an organism? Pragmatic activism, that is, the philosophy of Fascism, would seem to indicate that the organism arises from the ends which are necessarily attributed to it, while the Labor Charter of 1927 suggests that social ends or objectives develop from the *a priori* existence of the nation itself. Yet why should the nation arise only within the framework of the state if the former is a primeval fact? Or, if the nation and the state are eternal in their social implications, what is the relation of this circumstance to a regime whose putative end is to express the *Zeitgeist* of our century?³

In origin Fascism had little doctrine, since it was a pragmatic code of action. But in order to answer charges rather than to stay the evolution of the movement, doctrine was finally established, as was the formal political party which now bears this name. The Labor Charter of 1927 is one of the fundamental documents in contemporary Italian theory. Article I declares:

³ See Alfredo Rocco, "The Political Doctrine of Fascism," *International Conciliation*, No. 223 (1926), p. 403. It may be suggested that Fascism oscillates between history as law and history as the result of the creative human will. As Mussolini has said, "Fascism is action and it is thought. . . . To know men one must know man; and to know man one must be acquainted with reality and its laws. . . . By the exercise of his free will, man can and must create his own world." See Mussolini, *op. cit.*, pp. 7-8.

The Italian Nation is an organism ha superior in power and duration to the individuals composing it. It is a moral, which finds its integral realization in th

Article II stipulates the specific this conception by saying "Work a social duty. On this score and protected by the State." Thus, w and organization are established the primary social objectives of progress of national culture and

The means adopted to attain tl diverse. A whole series of social, reforms have been instituted, but legitimately fall upon the corpora cal reconstruction of Italy. The L by the Grand Council of Fascisr National Council of Corporator seven sections; while in 1934 the the same year finally brought int category corporations. At the same of national federations of syndic workers were reorganized by redt from thirteen to nine.⁴ While stil porative state has arrived. To the l capitalism in its pure form, nor is the planned economy, and pionee capitalism. As Rocco has said,

⁴ On the corporative state, see in general Al *State* (New York, 1927); Werner Niederer, *Der S* chen und Leipzig, 1932); Fausto Pitigliani, *The I* 1933); *Fortune Magazine*, July, 1934, "The C *Mussolini's Italy* (New York, 1935), Ch. XVII; . (International Labor office), Vol. 49 (1934) pp. 2 Vol. 52 (1934) pp. 247-48; Benito Mussolini, *F* (Rome, 1935), has a rather complete collection o the student of Italian corporativism.

Centuries ago the state, as the specific organ of justice, abolished personal self-defense in individual controversies and substituted for it state justice. The time has now come when class self-defense must be replaced by state justice.⁵

In the corporation we find the principle of joint vertical presentation, while in the confederations the principle of class representation is continued on the basis of horizontal structure. Only in the corporations do workers and employers become members of the same organization, but in each of the twenty-two corporations we find, in addition to the representatives of the workers and employers, the spokesmen of the Fascist party and the bureaucracy, technical experts, and other interests which may be called in for the purpose in hand. The confederations have no direct relation to the corporations, since the worker and employer representation is chosen from the various national federations which compose the confederations. The federation which is drawn into the corporation retains its membership in the confederation, but bears in this new relation a widened degree of self-government. The twenty-two category corporations are, as has been said, experimental; this number may be increased in the future, or it may be reduced. It should be borne in mind that there might have been hundreds of corporations instead of the limited number which has been established.

A few remarks must be made on the political reorganization of Italy, since it bears directly on the problem of attaining social ends. Fundamentally, say the authoritarians, demo-liberalism leads to either the excesses of unrestrained capitalism or to the abuses of revolutionary socialism. Rocco and others have declared that liberalism, democracy, and socialism are the logical offspring, each of the other.⁶ A movement with a *Weltanschauung* can

⁵ Rocco, *op. cit.*, p. 406.

⁶ Rocco, *op. cit.*, p. 399.

tolerate no opposition on the future. The technique of the authoritarian stands about where demo-liberal Congress of Vienna. If great depected in the future, we may alniques of authoritarianism which of the movement. The most intsingle, official party, and the suppi of the liberal principle of opposit. The party and the leader, *Il Du* the governing class of the count

But behind the rule of the significant principle, as to the c relation to the attainment of sc may be said that the authoritarian culturally and economically, minded. Political democracy in a to realize the full potentialities achievement. The masses cling to about the doctrinal facade of the however, the fact of leadership a the future.

Fascism therefore not only rejects the c . . . but it also proclaims that the gre: a suitable advocate of social interests fo to ignore individual private interests in of society and of history is a very rare chosen few.⁷

⁷ Rocco, *op. cit.*, p. 405. See also Giovanni Fascism," *Foreign Affairs*, VI (1928), 290-304; C chen und Leipzig, 1928), p. 280.

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find the principle of joint vertical confederations the principle of continued on the basis of horizontal corporations do workers and employers of the same organization, but in two corporations we find, in addition to the workers and employers, the fascist party and the bureaucracy, their interests which may be called and. The confederations have no corporations, since the worker and is chosen from the various national confederations. The federation the corporation retains its membership, but bears in this new relation self-government. The twenty-two years, as has been said, experimental; increased in the future, or it may be borne in mind that there might have corporations instead of the limited one established.

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tolerate no opposition on the fundamentals of its faith. The technique of the authoritarian state probably now stands about where demo-liberalism stood just after the Congress of Vienna. If great developments may be expected in the future, we may also point to certain techniques of authoritarianism which seem to be characteristic of the movement. The most interesting of these is the single, official party, and the suppression, as far as possible, of the liberal principle of opposition outside of the party. The party and the leader, *Il Duce*, constitute the elite or the governing class of the country.

But behind the rule of the elite there is a broadly significant principle as to the character of a people in relation to the attainment of social ends. In general it may be said that the authoritarians regard the masses as culturally and economically, rather than politically minded. Political democracy in all its aspects fails by far to realize the full potentialities of the state in social achievement. The masses cling to the soil and care little about the doctrinal facade of the movement; they accept, however, the fact of leadership and hope for the best in the future.

Fascism therefore not only rejects the dogma of popular sovereignty . . . but it also proclaims that the great mass of the citizens is not a suitable advocate of social interests for the reason that the capacity to ignore individual private interests in favor of the higher demands of society and of history is a very rare gift and the privilege of the chosen few.⁷

⁷ Rocco, *op. cit.*, p. 405. See also Giovanni Gentile, "The Philosophic Basis of Fascism," *Foreign Affairs*, VI (1928), 290-304; Carl Schmitt, *Verfassungslehre* (München und Leipzig, 1928), p. 280.