

# Long Before Bloomberg, There Was Mussolini

Compare the “emergency powers” rhetoric of California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger and “national unity” talk of waiting-in-the-wings Presidential candidate Michael Bloomberg, with those of Benito Mussolini, the fascist dictator of Italy (1922 to 1945), and you find the same corporatist double-talk. No wonder: The backers of Schwarzenegger and Bloomberg, are financial circles intent on imposing fascist regimes as the outcome of today’s economic breakdown crisis.

## Mussolini, 1922: ‘Economy, Work and Discipline’

The newly appointed premier, in an address to parliament on Nov. 16, 1922: “In Italy, there is no lack of programs, but there is a lack of will power to translate programs into action,” adding, “I can dissolve Parliament the day after tomorrow, just as easily as next year...”

“Above the minorities that go in for militant politics, there are 40 millions of Italians who work, who sweat, who reproduce themselves, who ask and have the right not to be thrown into chronic disorder and faction...”

What was Mussolini’s economic program? “My internal policy can be expressed in the following words: economy, work, discipline. The financial problem is a fundamental problem. We must arrive at a balancing of the State budget...”

“Let us take an oath to restore our finances and we will restore them; to follow a peaceful foreign policy and we will follow it; to discipline the nation, and we will discipline it...”

(Account from the fawning coverage in the Nov. 17, 1922 *New York Times*, “Mussolini Demands Chamber Obey Him or Be Dissolved.”)

## Mussolini, 1932: Fascism Denies Pursuit of Happiness

In a 1932 tome, entitled, “The Doctrine of Fascism,” in clear opposition to the American commitment to the “pursuit of happiness,” and the “general welfare,” Mussolini wrote:

“Fascism ... does not believe in the possibility of ‘happi-

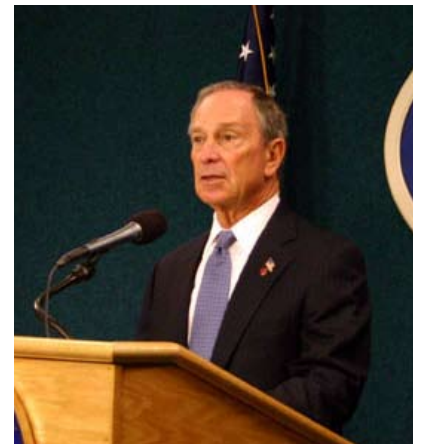


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*Mussolini’s Fascist policies, enforced by his “squadristi,” are the model for Schwarzenegger’s “emergency powers” regime, and Bloomberg’s “national unity” rhetoric.*



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ness’ on earth as conceived by the economic literature of the 18th Century...

“Fascism denies the materialistic conception of happiness as a possibility, and abandons it to the economists of the mid-eighteenth century. This means that Fascism denies the equation: well-being = happiness, which sees in men mere animals, content when they can feed and fatten, thus reducing them to a vegetative existence pure and simple...”

“... The Fascist State is ... a unique and original creation. It is not reactionary but revolutionary, for it anticipates the solution of certain universal problems which have been raised elsewhere, in the political field by the splitting up of parties, the usurpation of power by parliaments, the irresponsibility of assemblies; in the economic field by the increasingly numerous and important functions discharged by trade unions and trade associations with their disputes and ententes, affecting both capital and labor; in the ethical field by the need felt for order, discipline, obedience to the moral dictates of patriotism.

“... The Fascist State lays claim to rule in the economic field no less than in others; it makes its action felt throughout the length and breadth of the country by means of its corporative, social, and educational institutions, and all the political, economic, and spiritual forces of the nation, organized in their respective associations, circulate within the State. A State based on millions of individuals who recognize its authority, feel its action, and are ready to serve its ends is not the tyrannical state of a medieval lordling...”

### **Schwarzenegger, 2008: ‘Permanent Victory’**

In his speech Jan. 10, Schwarzenegger, issuing a declaration of fiscal emergency in California, decreed that the state faces a “very tough solution.” He said he will eliminate more than 7,000 jobs from the state payroll and make other cuts. His formulation is, “With tough times come historic opportunities, and I’m convinced that the Legislature will help in order to take this temporary problem that we have and turn it into a permanent solution, a permanent victory for the people of California, by joining me to enact true budget reform.

“We simply cannot have a budget system where revenues and spending are not tied together. We must rise to the challenge and fix California’s budget system once and for all.”

### **Bloomberg, 2008: ‘National Unity’ Corporatism**

At the Jan. 6-7, 2008, “national unity” confab, in Norman, Oklahoma (see separate article), a mission statement was released, using soft-sell rhetoric to cover the corporatist policies behind the initiative. Excerpts (from coverage in the *Norman Transcript*, Jan. 7):

“Our budget and trade deficits are out of control. We are squandering our children’s future. The ominous transfer of our national wealth has made our economy vulnerable, and our economic strength and competitiveness are both declining. Middle-income Americans are struggling to keep their homes and jobs and educate their children...”

“We are failing to address [the nation’s problems] because rampant partisanship has paralyzed the ability of our government to act. If we allow polarizing politics to continue, we will remain a nation divided and no matter who is elected this fall, he or she will not have a mandate for governing.

“... In order to break this partisan impasse, we urge the presidential candidates to provide: clear descriptions of how they would establish a government of national unity; specific strategies for reducing polarization and reaching bipartisan consensus; plans to go beyond tokenism to appoint a truly bipartisan cabinet with critical posts held by the most qualified people available regardless of political affiliation; and proposals for bipartisan executive and legislative policy groups in critical areas such as national security. National elections present an opportunity for candidates and citizens to have a serious and civil discussion of the imperative issues facing our country at home and abroad...”