The use of the phrase 'Islamo-Fascism', as recently heard in the mouths of members of the Bush administration and its apologists such as Pennsylvania's Senator Santorum, is a fine example of the art of the propagandist: the deliberate misuse and misapplication of words to promote false and emotionally misleading impressions and assumptions.

Fascism, Mussolini said "should be properly called corporatism, since it is the merger of state and corporate power". Modern definitions add "together with belligerent nationalism." Surely that description fits 21st century America, with her wholehearted endorsement and adoption of Eisenhower's 'military-industrial complex', far better than it does any economic or political entity in Middle East. But the use of 'Fascism' in the Bush administration's context is not intended accurately to characterize any of fundamentalist Islamic state or organization presently emergent. Rather it is intended principally to arouse the anger and resentment of survivors, veterans and their descendents of WWII, our war on an appropriately defined 'Fascism' over half a century ago. It is an attempt to engender enmity toward the emergent fundamentalist Islamic states or organizations by a false and inappropriate allusion to and association with our former enemies.

What about the 'Islamo' characterization? The attempt here is to connect Islam with Fascism. Is Fascism by any other religion less odious? What about Christian-Fascism? Germany and Italy were after all nominally Christian states in the 1930s-40s. What about Judeo-Fascism? Is that form any more admirable than the other kinds? Is there a Confucian-Fascism? How about secular-Fascism?

Think about those who use such demagogic phrases to try to engender enmity and hate in the place of thoughtful and considered reflection on the true nature of those peoples, states and organizations that presently challenge America's 'claim' to world domination. Is not rational response vastly more likely to be persuasive and ultimately effective than knee-jerk appeals to emotional reactions based on bigotry, hate and prejudice?

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