To the memory of Naomi
Her ways were ways of pleasantness
and all her paths were peace.
International Fascism

Cooperation between fascist movements and states was common in the 1930s, but a fascist International never was established along the lines of the Comintern. Germany and Italy provided money, logistic support, and, on occasion, weapons to weaker fascist organizations, especially those in the Balkans. But neither Hitler nor Mussolini had high hopes with regard to the political prospects of these groups, terrorist or nonterrorist. Fascism was the antithesis of an internationalist movement, there was no reason that, say, a Hungarian and a Romanian fascist should consider the other a comrade in arms.

After World War II, the Nazis and fascists cooperated in helping war criminals escape to Latin America and the Middle East. Even later, they exchanged information and propaganda material and held small international gatherings in Malmo, Sweden, and Dixmuiden, Belgium. In 1962 Oswald Mosley, the veteran British fascist leader, met with his peers of the Italian, German, and Belgian far Right, and they passed a resolution (the Declaration of Venice) calling for a Europe-wide fascist party. But this came to naught, and subsequent exchanges between Spanish and Italian fascist groups and other international meetings in the 1970s and 1980s led nowhere either.

American neo-Nazis thought Germany a more promising ground for their propaganda than their native country and frequently visited Europe. The French and Belgian New Right supplied literature and apparently also some money to Russian neofascist groups. De Benoist, Robert Steukers, and others visited Moscow, and their pronouncements were given much publicity by Aleksandr Prokhanov and Aleksandr Dugin, the chief ideologists of the Russian far Right. It was no accident (old-style Leninists would have said) that a Russian ideological journal named Elementy was launched, modeled on the Nouvelle droite organ, Eléments. (There is also a Flemish Eléments.) One of the ideological periodicals of the French extreme Right is named Identité, and there is also an Austrian Identität. Zhirinovsky established contact with Le Pen as well as the German Republicans, Frey's party in Munich, and Austrian extreme right-wingers. But he also tried to enter the World Union of Liberal Parties. Frey, in turn, visited Moscow to address Zhirinovsky's party.

At the meetings of neofascist parties, guests from abroad can be found, representing all kinds of "nationalist parties" with important-sounding names though wholly unknown even to specialists. These honored guests talk emphatically, radically, and, above all, at great length. More often than not it is never clear whether these sectarians represent anyone but themselves, whether they are clinically mad or perhaps agents provocateurs.

There also is an Arab—Middle Eastern connection. A Moscow daily newspaper named Al Kudz (Jerusalem), which became one of the papers of the Russian extreme Right, was financed by an Arab "businessman" who was a resident of the Russian capital. Russian and German right-wingers sing the praises of Iraq's Saddam Hussein, probably not without some reciprocal favors, and a neofascist leader has become the chief propagandist of Libya's Mu'ammar Gadhafi in Italy.

Lyndon Larouche's organization, one of the most bizarre sects of the extreme Right and originally Trotskyite in inspiration, has been very active in Germany, has established a branch in Moscow, has cooperated with the Islamists in Sudan and other Arab and North African countries, and has made itself the spokesman of Saddam Hussein and Hamas, the extremist Muslim fundamentalist group. The net results of these and similar activities, however, has been very nearly nil.

More important is the "technical faction" in the European parliament that was created in 1989, consisting of ten deputies of Le Pen's party, six German Republicans, and one Belgian from the Flemish bloc. The technical faction is dominated by the French, because this was the strongest group when it was formed. It adopted the National Front's program as the common platform of all the extreme right-wing groups. At the same time the technical faction was instrumental in setting up the European Confederation of National Youth. This youth group, based mainly on Le Pen's Front and the Italian MSI, meets at "summer universities" in Spain, at marches in honor of Rudolf Hess in Wunsiedel (where he is buried), and at the anniversary of Franco's death at Ulrichsberg, Austria, where Austrian SS veterans and their admirers are addressed by Jörg Haider, the leader of Austria's second largest party.

But the technical faction still has not achieved unity of action. In Brussels, the four Italian neofascists walked out of a meeting because they thought south Tyrol was an integral part of Italy, whereas the German Republicans demanded that it be given the right of self-determination. Even the German Republicans split over the propagation of pro-Nazi ideas; Franz Schönhuber, the leader, proclaimed that the program of the radical faction was "anti-human, neo-Nazi, racist and extremist." Schönhuber, in turn, was thrown out of his own party in September 1994.

Cooperation among the neofascists is difficult because they do not have a common denominator. The Nietzschean, elitist doctrines of Evola and the French New Right have been rejected by most Russian right-wing extremists as unsuitable and even counterproductive on Russian soil. More-
Among the issues we have not discussed so far are extreme right-wing thought and action in North America. The historical predecessors are well known—the Ku Klux Klan and the John Birchers, Father Coughlin and Gerald K. Smith, the Silver Shirts, McCarthyism, and the Aryan National Congress, the Aryan Resistance, the Identity Church, and some of the Survivalists. These and other groups have been numerous and not influential. Given the chaotic American party system, it has been relatively easy for small groups of determined people to infiltrate the major parties and be elected—for instance, Klan members and more recently Lyndon LaRouche’s followers.

Some of these groups openly advocate and use violence. They share with the Nazis their burning hatred of minorities, anti-Semitism, and a firm belief in gigantic conspiracies. But virtually none has turned to systematic political action, nor has there been a determined effort to gain power by means of armed violence. Whatever the misdeeds of Senator Joseph McCarthy, he never dreamed about a fascist America with himself as the leader. Most American extremist groups are defensive by nature; they believe themselves under siege and subject to relentless attacks by foreign groups, who want to undermine American traditions. They are backward looking, in the tradition of the vigilante and the posse. Alternatively, they believe that Judgment Day is near, that the cities will go up in flames, but that they will survive and build a new America. The bombing of government offices in Oklahoma City in April 1995 was carried out by a number of paranoiacs who thought themselves besieged by an all-powerful state. The perpetrators imagined they were engaging in an act of revenge. They were not even members of a quasi-religious sect like the Aum Shinrikyo, which in March had carried out indiscriminate poison-gas attacks in Japan. The chief weapon of terrorism is violence, and fascism is a firm believer in violence. It is also true that on occasion fascist movements have engaged in individual terrorism rather than mass violence. But terrorism is still no synonym for fascism, but merely an instrument, a means to an end, and the ends often are very different in character.

Since the mid-1970s, groups such as Louis Farrakhan’s Nation of Islam, an organization for African Americans, have sprung up, and they have been more successful in gaining a hearing and attracting followers than have the white extremists in their communities. The belief in a Jewish world conspiracy is all-pervasive: Jews were the principal slaveholders; they exploited blacks; and they invented AIDS to kill blacks. The gurus of this movement deny that the Holocaust ever took place and, moreover, believe that Christianity was invented to keep blacks in submission. They also maintain that women are inferior to men and have no equal rights, that homosexuals and lesbians are evil, and that UFOs exist and should be paid due attention. According to them, America is the main enemy of the black person. The Nation of Islam has also admonished young people to improve themselves, to work hard, not to take drugs, and not to kill one another. But these initiatives take second place to the hate propaganda, which has a much greater appeal: It is always easier to put the blame for the current dismal state of affairs on outsiders than to call for self-criticism and hard work.

With the exception of a few sectarians such as George Rockwell, no one has claimed to be a Nazi or neo-Nazi. The fact is that the Nazi and fascist idea would not have been attractive in America, except at the height of the Depression. America has not lost a war (except perhaps the Vietnam War); it has no territorial demands; it does not militaristic; it does not dream of an imperial mission; and in recent times, no one has wanted to conduct an aggressive war. America is not ethnically homogenous, and although there has been some resentment against new immigrants, this could not, until recently, have served as a political platform.

The mood in America has changed in recent years, but as in Europe it cannot seriously be claimed that the initiatives to limit immigration and to keep out illegal immigrants are fascist in inspiration. As one-third of Latinos and almost one-half of blacks and Asian-Americans voted for such an initiative in California in 1994, it cannot be argued that the motivation is racist.

The propaganda of black organizations such as the Nation of Islam, however strident and similar to fascism in inspiration or rhetoric, reaches only a limited audience. If it is fascism, it is the fascism of a minority that can only hope, at most, to cause damage to the state and society. But it cannot possibly aspire to conquer the country. Nonetheless, fascist trends among minority groups is a fascinating topic to which insufficient attention has so far been paid. As the Million Man March on Washington in October 1995 has shown, some of the initiatives of these groups have an appeal well beyond their normal constituents. It recalls in some ways the reception given in Europe sixty years earlier to the idealistic slogans of organizations such as the Iron Front in Romania, which called for a national recovery, solidarity, rejuvenation, honesty, fatherhood, motherhood, and, generally speaking, a moral as well as a political rebirth.