

Jews And The Stimulus Package--Of Nazi Germany

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Jonathan Tobin writes about the attempt of some--particularly David Leonhardt of The New York Times--to support Obama's economic policies by defending FDR against those who claim that FDR's New Deal was not as effective as is claimed.

Leonhardt writes:

Every so often, history serves up an analogy that's uncomfortable, a little distracting and yet still very relevant.

...More than any other country, Germany — Nazi Germany — then set out on a serious stimulus program. The government built up the military, expanded the autobahn, put up stadiums for the 1936 Berlin Olympics and built monuments to the Nazi Party across Munich and Berlin.

The economic benefits of this vast works program never flowed to most workers, because fascism doesn't look kindly on collective bargaining. But Germany did escape the Great Depression faster than other countries.

In response, Tobin writes:

...I found it fascinating that in the course of Leonhardt's latest piece on this issue, he saw it fit to prove the genius of stimulus spending by pointing to the example of the Third Reich.

That's right. Leonhardt believes that Adolf Hitler's building of the autobahn, facilities for the 1936 Olympics, and other public works projects such as monuments to the Nazi Party "helped Germany escape the Great Depression faster than other countries." Unmentioned by Leonhardt was Hitler's vast expansion of the German military (long before the United States expanded its own armed forces) as well as the wealth that accumulated to various official arms of the state from the theft of Jewish properties. Later in the same piece, Leonhardt also lauds America's World War II mobilization as showing the genius of a stimulus, though he fails to mention that along with all the tanks, planes, and ships that were built, nearly 15 million Americans were also under arms during the war. That helped lower unemployment too.

[emphasis added]

I was struck by the idea that part of the success of the economy of Nazi Germany was derived by what they did to the Jews in Germany at the time.

I am also struck by the lengths some will go to find redemption in evil.

When it comes to reviving a country's economy, history records that Mussolini was no slouch either:

Now with some backing Mussolini formed the National Fascist Party. With this power he was able to take over the government and declared a complete dictatorship. The Italy that was once falling apart was now back up on its feet. Mussolini was a dictator of the people. He built roads, harnessed rivers, increased production and ran the trains on time. The standard of living Italy was increasing and the people were loving him. He was someone the people could relate to he was a success story. From poverty to ruling the country and improving it on the way.

All can be forgiven when one is 'a dictator of the people.'

Back in November 2005, Steven Erlanger was already writing:

And yet, the budget deficit has been tamed, city employees are getting raises and more roads are being paved courtesy of the new party in power - Hamas.

...But in its short tenure, Hamas has also brought a new measure of modernity to this town of 45,000 people. It has tackled the budget and even predicts a surplus. It has introduced previously alien practices, like computerized bookkeeping and competitive bidding on city contracts, and has begun to investigate past corruption.

From dictators of the people to terrorists of the people.

Nazi Germany and Mussolini brought disaster to their people--and Hamas is doing the same.

Let's hope that in a democracy the long range results are better.

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