

Patriotism, the Anti-Nationalism



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“One’s country” is not synonymous with “one’s nation.” Many are confused on this point. To equate the two is to confuse friend with foe, ally with enemy. An obviously dangerous error to make. Those who do are either in a delusion about what a nation is, or have, most unfortunately, taken up with society’s enemy *numero uno*. So then, what does it mean to be a “patriot”? Let’s see.

Patriotism

Etymologically, a “compatriot” is a fellow-countryman, or “of one’s fathers.” Hence, a patriot is one who identifies with his kin and his kin’s kin; his country, in other words, holding their needs in high regard. Since every person has a natural desire for liberty, patriotism is the state of seeking to secure the liberty of your family and compatriots. Defending others in your country is a patriotic act, but so is working toward your mutual benefit. Often patriotism means putting the needs of your fellows above your own.

Many a patriot can be found around the world today and in the past. When one fights back, violently or nonviolently, against encroachment by criminals or governments, he is fighting as a true patriot for the liberty of his country. So long as his actions do not encroach on anyone else, his fight is noble and honorable. If patriotism is fighting *for* one’s country, then what is nationalism?

Nationalism

Precisely the opposite, actually. Nationalism is the state of seeking to secure the power of those who claim to be your rulers, your government, your “national leaders.” Nations are states, and the state is society’s greatest living enemy. The state, an organization of individuals who claim the right to monopolize the legal use of force, have taken their power by force and maintained it by propaganda. State actors have chosen to use the “political means,” violence, against the rest of their country. They form the largest criminal enterprise extant, and are therefore the greatest threat to the liberty of everyone else.

If nationalism is the securing of power to the state, which power necessarily encroaches on the liberty of a country's members, and patriotism is the securing of that liberty, then nationalism and patriotism are bitter enemies. Nationalistic acts like saluting the state's banners, singing its anthems, pledging allegiance to it, and donning its colors in praise are antithetical to acts of patriotism. One cannot be both a nationalist and a patriot. It's a logical impossibility. Those who claim to be patriots while simultaneously supporting and defending the state are the most dangerous kind of people to the liberty of others. They pretend to care about the liberty of their fellows while working to take it away.

Final Thoughts

If you find yourself in the precarious position of believing yourself to be patriotic while promoting the state, you have an important choice to make. Will you continue supporting and defending the institution in society responsible for the loss of liberty of your brothers and sisters, or will you become a true patriot and fight back against the state and its encroachments? Choose wisely.