

NATIONALISM AND INTERNATIONALISM.

by Karl Polanyi

*for
Wes, Inc.*

- I. Terms.
- II. Issues
- III. The Lesson of History
- IV. Practicable ideals.

I. Terms.

You surely will wish me to get onto my subject as swiftly as possible and not to waste time on ~~many~~ /introductions. That is what I propose to do. *Don't waste too much time longwinded repetitions.*

~~Now~~ you have all heard of nationalism and internationalism, mostly in the sense that internationalism is good thing and nationalism is a bad thing. That the world might be saved from the atom-bomb if there was more true internationalism, and less nationalism, and so on.

So far, so good.

But if anybody wishes to convey that nationalism is not so bad after all, ~~then~~ he usually calls it patriotism, and if he wishes to suggest that internationalism is not ~~always~~ a good thing, ~~and~~ that ~~it~~ can be overdone, ~~then~~ he need only call it cosmopolitanism, and most people will begin to agree with him..

This does not seem to get us very far. True internationalism means for us today something like 'loyalty to mankind', which should not be confused with disloyalty to one's country or even the ~~aprotected~~ colourless existence of the person who feels equally at home everywhere because he has no country of his own, no language of his own, no people of his own, which we mean by a cosmopolitan attitude. *The same applies to nationalism, which is an intolerant, conceited, bragging attitude to other peoples, while the love of one's country, true patriotism is not only a natural emotion but is ~~always~~ also a praiseworthy attitude.*

(Let us

So by all means ~~be~~ true internationalists, but not cosmopolitans; true patriots without ~~falling into nationalism~~ *erring into nationalism.*

It ~~is~~ important to get the meaning of these terms ~~roughly~~ clear.

~~Now~~ ~~let us~~ get on to the questions at issue.

But now let us get on to the questions at issue.

II. The issues.

At the heart of the problem is the question, how to avoid war and how to ensure peaceful change in a world of many peoples?

Three answers ~~exist~~ offer:

Let all countries, big and small, be ~~absolutely~~ absolutely equal, free and independent. That is the system of sovereign states.

At the other end, there is the idea of ~~human~~ world government. Let there be only one state, one government, one supreme power on this planet.

Intermediate between the two, are regional organisations or federations of the type of the Three ~~Big~~ Commonwealths, that of the British, the Russian and the American, maybe a Continental European.

The first has all the advantages of freedom, equality and self-determination, with the disadvantages^{antages} attached to ~~yielding~~ power without responsibility, ~~and~~ thus creating a that condition of International Anarchy which ~~most~~^{is most conducive} ~~invariably~~ lead to war;

The second possesses the advantages of peace and order, world wide views and general human interests, with the disadvantages attached to a world -state, ~~leaving~~^{which puts} all peoples and nations under the ~~sway~~^{rule} of ~~an~~ ~~infinitely~~ distant and impersonal power.

The third is neither fish nor flesh nor good red herring, but it may still represent the ~~best~~ practicable middle way, ~~which~~^{it may} ~~is~~ ~~rid~~ of us, international anarchy without ~~hannohang~~ making us set sail for utopia.

III. ^{What} ~~The~~ Lesson of History.

- A. That internationalism is not a new thing and that ~~x~~ nationalism ~~x~~ ~~man~~ is ~~the~~ newer ~~one~~.
- B. That nationalism is not a simple term, meaning just one thing, but that there are many important variants of it.
- C. ~~That neither an nationalism that disregards the~~ ~~general interests of mankind~~, nor an internationalism that ~~disregards national~~ ~~interests~~ ~~has any reality.~~ ^{would}

C. We need the right kind of nationalism, and the right kind of internationalism.

The periods of history:
a. When man emerges from the stage of primitive society into

civilization he does not orgainse in ~~nation-states~~, but the manifold peoples and nations form ~~large~~ empires comprising a great variety of languages, races, ~~and~~ ~~ancient~~ ~~customs~~, habits and , often even ~~many~~ religions. Such Empires were the Egyptian, ^{an} ~~the~~ Assyrian, Chinese, Persian, Hellenic, Roman Empires. The ~~empire~~ ^{international State} is ~~therefore~~ , prior to the nation -State. It seemed more compelling to belong to an international religion or international Empire than to belong to ' nations'. The idea that human communities ^{steadily} ~~grow~~ from small to large, from family to tribe, ~~or~~ peoples, nations, empires and finally to international associations is ~~utterly~~ ^{utterly} unreal.

The most important empire we are connered with is the Christian Commonwelath of the Middle Ages which had ^{two} ~~to~~ heads, a secular head (the Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire) and a religious ~~head~~ ^{head}: the Pope in Rome. The modern world came into being ^{when} ~~by~~ this Christian Commonwelath ^{al} ~~breaking~~ up into nation-States and national Churches.

During the High Middle Ages the geater part of ~~Europe~~ Christian world was diversified only in its local customs and vernacular speech, but it was ~~culturally~~ ^{culturally}, ~~and~~ ^{belatedly theologically it was one.} ~~commercially~~, and socially unified. The ~~same~~ ^{same} institutions, the same educational systems, the same religion and ~~philosophy~~ ^{philosophy}, the same language of the educated ruled all over ~~Europe~~ ^{Europe} the territories of what is today called Germany and France, Italy and the Low countries, Great Britain, Spain, and Poland. Goods could move ~~freely~~ ^{freely} from taxation so far as national frontiers were concerned, merchant law was identical in ~~the~~ Novgorod in Russia and Bruges in the Low countries, in the Steel yard of the Hanse in London or of the court in Venice which tried Shylock for breach of currency regulations.

or theologian

A literary competition might ~~be held~~ ^(see ~~the~~ ~~works~~ ~~&~~ ~~scholar~~) ~~be held~~ ⁱⁿ ~~competitions~~ ^{of}

for prizes

the most various peoples ~~writing in open contest~~; knights and firars,

priests and scholastic philosophers would ~~have~~ ^{barry} cover up under their

~~Latin~~ names a dozen different nationalities, a student from Oxford

could continue his studies in Bologna ^{German Wittenberg} or ^{in Italian} ~~or~~ ^{in Spanish} ~~or~~ ^{in Czech} ~~or~~ ⁱⁿ Prague ~~in~~

~~Szechoslovakia~~ more nearly on the identical curriculum than he

could have at the beginning of the Twentieth Century; a merchant

could carry on a law suit between ^{at Winchester's vice product court} Danzig and Genoa and be surer of

the same appreciation of maritime law than ^{perhaps} ever since. The same

rites could be celebrated in the same language in all churches, the same

~~teaching~~ law, ^{of grammar} ~~of~~ philosophy ^{of} /would be propounded, the same social

classes, the same agricultural methods, the same industrial institution

would be found to function. The term nation was not understood. It was

used only at ^{church councils and} ~~universities~~ to denote ^{territorial} groups of ~~inhabitants~~ but

the ~~inhabitants~~ ^{groups} denoted did not belong to one but to several nations ^(in the modern sense).

NOTES anybody who belonged to an other town or neighbourhood was equally a

At the University of Paris the 4 nations were France, Picardym Norm a

^{sto} ~~at~~ ^{the} ~~University~~ of Prague Czech, Bavarian, Polish and Saxon. England.

Peles, the English nations included the Scandinavians.

The Middle Ages were in fact, cosmopolitan, and ^{many} ~~many~~ of its institutio

tions bore the characteristics of internationalism at its best.

b. The Reformation meant the establishment of national Churches

instead of the universal Church of Rome, and the development of big

~~States~~ ^{States} in the place of the congeries of ~~many~~ towns and feudal

principalities. This is the beginning of what ~~was~~ later was described

as France, Germany, Italy, England and so on. But at the time ~~these~~

~~these~~ ^{these were} merely geographical ^{terms} ~~concentrations~~ like India, in the Nineteenth

or even today. ^{still} ~~It denotes~~ a sub-continent of numerous peoples

which may or may not produce an Indian nation in the future

but certainly has ~~not~~ ^{not} produced one until now.

The first descriptions of France as France can be found in the prophetic speeches of Joan of Arc, as presented by G.B.S., or of ~~Elisabethan~~ England in John of Gaunt's speech, as ~~shown by~~ ^{presented in} Shakespeare. ~~But~~ Actually, ~~inhandby~~ ~~the~~ ~~official~~ ~~language~~ ~~of~~ ~~Elisabethan~~ ~~England~~ ~~was~~ ~~French~~, in the Swedish ~~Senate~~ ^{Senate} of the the 17th century speeches were made not only in Swedish but also in German and Dutch, ~~mainly~~ ~~by~~ ~~Frederick~~ ~~the~~ ~~Great~~, King of Prussia had been the ruler of the politically most active German state for thirty-seven years when ~~an~~ ~~he~~ ~~told~~ ~~Voltaire~~ of an argument which he had held with the Count of Montmoerency-Laval, who wished to learn German, and whom Frederick tried hard to dissuade because no good German authors existed to make the effort worthwhile... ^{NO German books in his library.} The first chair in French literature was created in 1773. The bulletins of the College de France were printed in Latin. Not before the second half of the 18th century was there any demand for the teaching of French at schools. While German universities were using German since the end of the 17th century- this was due to the R-formation- in France Latin was generally the language of science up to the middle of the 18th century. And that at a time when French was the universal language in Europe, in France herself the French language was not connected with the idea of nationhood. The period of the Enlightenment (1690-1750) did not think of French as the language of the French people, but as the universal language of Enlightenment.

Even in politics, nationhood was not yet expressed in terms of nationality. How otherwise could ^{have} Charles ~~and~~ II be ~~pay~~ ^{secretly in the} of the ^{Louis XIV's} French King? And the Whigs imported a Dutch prince to be king of England. ^{In both cases religion was more formative than nationality. Charles II was a land. The Georges of the Hanover line were remarkably un-English. And only ^{in 1717} ~~recently~~ did the royal family ^{by proclamation} assume an English name. ^{secretly a Catholic. James II was openly Catholic & a Protestant Dutchman was called in to settle the crown and for all the Protestant succession in England.}}

c. Modern nationality starts with the French Revolution when for the first time, ~~the~~ patriotism is centred on nationhood, a nationhood primarily expressed through the language. From the French revolution onwards nationality ^{on the Continent} means constitutionalism, and constitutionalism means liberty. The ~~symbol~~ ^h of this type of revolutionary nationalism is the republic. Monarchies are regarded as non-national. Why? ^{could} ~~Because~~ the traditional principalities in Europe bore no relationship to nationality. The best example were the Hapsburgs, ~~an~~ ^{an} originally German-Swiss family which -- partly on account of its poverty -- was repeatedly ^{& elected} ~~chosen~~ to the Imperial throne of Germany ~~(by force of election)~~.

Their great means of acquisition was ~~the~~ marriage. They became kings ^{rulers} of Spain and eventually, ~~kings~~ of the ~~Netherlands~~ Low countries. As Dukes of Austria they acquired the throne of Bohemia and of Hungary. Later a number ^{of} of other crowns were added. ~~How~~ ^{The} such a patrimonial empire bore no reference ~~whatsoever~~ to nationality. In Germany the princes were the greatest obstacle ^{to the} establishment of a united Germany. Later the same ^{name of patriots} was the position in Italy. That's why the ~~nationalist~~ ^{national} was equivalent to revolutionary. For he who stood for the nation's unity, must needs stand for the dispossession of the hereditary dynasties... It is from here that the word nation gained its ^{libertarian} and republican halo. The nationalism of Mazzini and Garibaldi was ~~naturally~~ republican and it was this association of liberty and revolution with ~~the~~ idea of the nation, which gave ~~human~~ ^{and animated} wings to it. ~~The~~ ^{and} ~~rising~~ ^{international} of the Greeks against the Turkish Sultans, of the Hungarians against the Austrian Emperor, of the Spanish people against the French supported despots in ~~Madrid~~ Madrid -- each of these movements showed the nation in alliance with the spirit of freedom and international brotherhood. ^{In this the} ~~nationhood~~ ^{classical period of patriotism} was ~~deemed~~ ^{entirely} compatible with ^{international} ~~international~~ ^{nationalism}.

Nationalism and internationalism (cont.)

d. Nobody can exactly tell when ^{Christian} (national) liberalism (passed into liberal nationalism. The change is marked by the coming of) imperialism. If nationalism is placed ^{at} ~~in~~ 1789, imperialism can be placed a century later, somewhere in the 1880 s. Not before 1882 is ~~there~~ a definite expansionist ~~in~~ tendency noticeable in Europe.

It is not correct that every ^{country} ~~state~~ always 'expands'. This is an entirely erroneous assumption. Between 1780 and 1880 practically all the Great Powers were anti-expansionist. ~~The Netherlands~~ France, England, Spain and Portugal lost their ^{overseas} empires ^{inside of 60 years:-} ~~between~~ 1763 (when France lost her American colonies to Great Britain,) ~~1783~~ when England lost ~~thirteen~~ her 13 North American colonies, 1820 s when Spain lost all their overseas colonies in Latin America. ~~Some~~ ^{Some} ~~where~~ ^{where} about 1780 s ~~the~~ conviction became general that colonies are wasting assets. Turgot had said: ~~they~~ ^{Colonies} are fated to ~~go their~~ go their own way like the ripe fruit which drops from the tree.'... The Industrial Revolution ^{had wrought the change.} Colonies had been raw materials supplying ^{tations} ~~plants~~, and lost their value when exports of manufactures became possible. The time when colonies were needed as markets had not yet arrived, since the industrial advantage of the mother country was at first so great that the colonies could not have competed anyway. In England the Liberals were Little Englanders. Even Bismarck refused to take any interest in expansion. He wanted to unite Germany but refused to gain a footing on the Balkans. And even more energetically he rejected the idea of colonial expansion. Disraeli spoke of the colonies as a mill stone around our necks. The change to imperialism came very suddenly. In 1882 England found that she could not afford to move out of Egypt, and

Nationalism and internationalism (cont.)

a most significant interim period started. In 1885 the whole of Africa was partitioned between the Great Powers. Bismarck suddenly turned colonial minded and hence supported the idea of colonial expansion.

At this juncture nationalism changed its tone and attitude. From having been a mood of world brotherhood and general fraternity it became a mood of national intolerance, rivalry and exclusiveness. Nationalism becomes allied with conservative ideals. The old connection between nationalism and constitutionalism liberty and democratic revolution ceases to operate. Nationalism becomes a jingo. Far from appealing to the noblest sentiments in man, it becomes an appeal to the instincts of degradation. In this country the Boer war sees this wave of rabid and grabbing nationalism at its height.

Nationalism is not any more an ally of the people who seek to gain their liberty from the ~~thought and sold them~~ as if they were cattle / ~~oppression of tyrants who~~, but instrument ~~becomes an~~ of business which uses it as a mantle for the most ruthless exploitation of/colonial peoples. The 'White man's burden' is not the burden of the liberator and missionary, ^{any more} but rather that of new owners of the gold and diamond mines ~~suppression of~~ who enrich themselves while endowing the natives with culture. whether they like it or not.

e. This last period - the degeneration of nationalism ^{into} ~~is~~ imperialism leads to the period of General Wars and, in their wake, to the revival of internationalism on a grand scale. The ^{establishment} ~~founding~~ of the League of Nations in 1919 and of the United Nations in 1945 heralds a new ~~age,~~ ~~of~~ in which nationalism - never stronger than to-day- is met by a serious counter force.

This allows us to

a This allws us to sum up the lessonsof history . Internationalism the feature of our time, is not a new thing, but rather the gansahn rule . Nationalism was the new thing. For a ti e internationalism was in eclipse. Now we are back to it again.

b Nationalism is not one simple thing, but a rather varied pattern of different movements. There is a very great difference between the freedom loving democratic progressive national liberalism of the maadnan early Nineteenth Cetnury and the grabbing, nonnannannann, totalitarian nationalism and imperialism of the early 'Twentieth.

Medieval internationalism was negative

nothing
value,
near
unit.

to stop go...
The new nation is a unit of great
because an individual cannot
a state to control it.
Regionalism may be a movement



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