



Don't let nationalism overtake patriotism

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Patriotism in its basic form is defined as “love for or devotion to one’s country,” according to Merriam-Webster’s Dictionary. However, the term has been misconstrued by many to mean blind loyalty. Let’s be frank, patriotism today is used to disguise greed and nationalism.

It is obvious by where our nation’s priorities are that there needs to be a redefining of what it means to be patriotic. The true patriot is not the one who demands that everyone blindly obeys and respects the president, but insists on constantly questioning everything the government puts out on the table because they love this country so dearly. I believe that patriotism has been associated with leaning more towards right-wing politics and supporting Trump, but that needs to change to being focused on a love for one’s country—and by no means only mean thinking right.

President Trump, in particular, has skewed patriotism to mean supporting causes that do not work in America’s favor and are based on his evaluation. It means supporting the construction of a \$5.7 billion wall that has been proven to be ineffective in stopping people from migrating to the United States of America; the Cato institute noted that building a wall would not stop people from building tunnels because “from 2007 to 2010, the Border Patrol found more than one tunnel per month, on average.” Patriotism also means despising the idea of universal health care when 28.9 million Americans under the age of 65 are uninsured, according to the Center of Disease Control, while applauding a \$717 billion military defense bill. How can we say that it is patriotic to support the military industrial complex when we can’t make it a point that every American is insured?

The irony is that most Trump supporters voted for Trump because “they related to changes in the party’s positions on issues related to American global dominance and the rise of a majority–minority America,” not because they actually know what it means to love and devote themselves to this country, according to a study done by Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America.

In the case of President Trump, supporting the wall does not make you somehow more of a patriot because you believe it’s defending our country from “violent” illegal immigrants.

The Cato Institute found that the native homicide arrest rate was “about 46 percent higher than the illegal immigrant homicide arrest rate.” What is patriotic about demonizing one group of people escaping violence from their home country in order to make better lives for themselves? Not to mention that the government shutdown issued over this wall has left 4,760 federal workers applying for unemployment in the last week of December 2018, according to the Department of Labor.

Evidently supporting the wall and Trump's understanding of patriotism is, in my opinion, the antithesis to true patriotism. If Trump was truly patriotic, then he would have checked his ego at the door of the White House and made sure that there was not a government shutdown and recognized that immigrants are essential to the American economy. Ironically, he has employed many immigrants himself in constructing and managing his hotels, according to [NPR](#).

I believe patriotism should be loving your country so much that you are willing to help foster the safest, healthiest environments for everyone who shares the same soil as you.

Greed does not benefit this country, and as President John F. Kennedy said, "Ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country." I suggest that Trump follows Kennedy's words of advice and starts to look out for people who actually need the support by using \$5.7 billion to take care of them, rather than promoting ignorance. According to our article "[The power of 5.7 billion dollars](#)," the money used to build the wall could be used to feed every homeless person in America for three and half years.

According to [Merriam Webster's dictionary](#), nationalism is "loyalty and devotion to a nation especially a sense of national consciousness exalting one nation above all others," as we discussed in "[The U.S. Reserves the Right to Refuse Entry](#)." This is a destructive and divisive ideal to back a nation that was founded on the grounds of supporting all people. A nationalistic president that believes in promoting of his ego at the cost of immigrants, federal workers and other nations cannot truly call himself a patriot.