

PATRIOTISM. Patriotism - and nationalism - are well disguised manifestations of the negative force; next to religion, patriotism is the foremost cause for extremism, fanaticism, violence, war. **P**atriotism is a base emotion used unashamedly by rulers to blind, distract and pacify the populace and to exploit their reasonable demands for safety, prosperity and peaceful continuity.

see my blog 861

It is with patriotism that we have our emotions whipped up and manipulated by unscrupulous leaders who clamber to firm up their positions.

This works best in totalitarian systems or with leaders bereft of constructive, progressive ideas, who go all out to fill the idea-void with patriotism.

The Spanish film director Luis Bunuel said, "God and Country are an unbeatable team, they break all records for oppression and bloodshed."

Patriotism and nationalism cause war; says Krishnamurti: "So long as there is nationalism, so long as you are a German or a Russian or an American, clinging to sovereignty, to an exclusive nationality, you are sure to have war."

see my blog 803

"Lurking beneath the surface of every society is the passionate yearning for a nationalist cause that exalts us, the kind that war alone can deliver. The nationalist patriot is an ignoramus; nationalism is the line of least resistance, the easy way. The nationalist myth often implodes with ferocity; its lies and absurdities become too hard to sustain."

Chris Hedges in his book

WAR is a FORCE THAT GIVES US MEANING

PRESENCE. If we love somebody, truly and unconditionally, what is the best gift we can give them? Is it a diamond ring? Is it a fancy holiday, a nice car or a house? No, it is presence. **P**resence ... not presents. What does it mean to give presence? It means to say, "I love you. I am here for you. I shall listen to you, understand you, accept you; and I will support you all the way."

This essay is inspired by the book True Love by Vietnamese Buddhist monk, teacher of mindfulness meditation, poet & peace activist Thich Nhat Hanh.

see also MINDFULNESS