**Ukraine nationalism**

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Pardon my lack of enthusiasm, but huge herds headed in the same direction have always made me nervous. I can’t help worrying about looming buffalo jumps.

They say it’s only a myth that lemmings run over cliffs, committing mass suicide. I hope that’s true.

Here is what bothers me: The War and reaction to it.

The clear and present danger is a militaristic Russian nationalism that enabled and continues to justify an invasion which is killing thousands, harming the environment, as well as destroying homes and workplaces. What to do? According to our governments, media, anointed experts and most every public voice, we must send weapons and other forms of military support to Ukrainian nationalists.

In other words, the solution to militaristic Russian nationalism is creating/reinforcing militaristic Ukrainian nationalism.

Is that really the best we can come up with? Are we simply forced to choose between nationalisms and since Russia is the aggressor (plus we in the West have been taught for generations they are Bad Guys) we must side with Ukraine?

But it’s not good enough to just sympathize with Ukrainian victims of an illegal war, according to herd wisdom, we must boycott, blockade and demonize Russia and Russians. We must ship Ukraine newer and more powerful weapons so it can defeat its evil enemy. We must expand our armament industries to enable this. Our military spending must increase to defend ourselves against the threat of ‘authoritarian’ others, like Russia and China We must send more ships, sailors, soldiers, missiles, airplanes close to the Bad Guys’ borders.

We must build more pipelines and increase our hydrocarbon production to replace the Bad Guy’s evil oil and natural gas. We must forget, or at least not talk about, other wars, countries whose borders have been violated by our side, our decades-long interference in Ukraine’s internal affairs, Nato’s imperial past and present, global warming, the possibility of a nuclear holocaust, colonial empires other than Russia, inequality, underdevelopment, consumerism, capitalism and even history, all in the name of focusing on the greatest threat to humanity right now – Russia’s invasion and consequent threat to Ukraine’s inviolable borders.

And above all else don’t ask who might want, and benefit from, this particular group think or you will be accused of siding with The Evil One.

Fellow bison running free on the wide-open prairie, forgive me my trespasses against your transparently propaganda-manufactured simplistic herd opinions, but I remember another time just like this as we ran over the cliff of World War 1. The Austro-Hungarian Empire was evil because it invaded Serbia. Germany was the land of dastardly Krauts who committed unspeakable crimes against brave Belgians after invading their country. They must be taught a lesson!

Have we not learned anything from history?

Shouldn’t someone shout: Careful! We are headed to a very dangerous place! Slaughter looms!

There’s got to be a better way of combatting the evil of militaristic nationalism than more militaristic nationalism. Throughout history that’s been tried again and again. The outcome has seldom been good for ordinary people.

Empires and oligarchs have always used nationalism to divide and conquer. They are adept at manipulating nationalism, ethnicity and religion to maintain or expand their power. Is it so difficult to imagine they are doing it again? On both sides. That means ‘our side’ too.

Why do we have such a powerful urge to cheer on ‘our side’ and who is that, really? Wouldn’t we all be better off if we could make ‘our side’ humanity as a whole, a healthy planet and all life on it? Shouldn’t our allies be all those people working to build a better world – by ending capitalism, imperialism, colonial relationships, war, environmental degradation, exploitation, racism, sexism, and other forms of oppression – regardless of their nationality, ethnicity, religion? Isn’t it long past time to build a real international movement – one our idealistic forebears used to sing about – that transcends nationalism to unite, rather than divide us, so we can overcome those who profit from exploitation, war and inequality?