Nationalism: The Other God That Failed
Why Do We Care At This Time?

Nationalism is what unites the people carrying the Israeli flag with the man wearing the Camp Auschwitz shirt.
Patriotism Versus Nationalism

• Patriotism – Love for or devotion to one’s country.

• Nationalism – defined as the “exalting one nation above all others and placing primary emphasis on promotion of its culture and interests as opposed to those of other nations or supranational groups.”

• Is America the GREATEST country? By what measure? For everyone? Have you been to all the other countries?

• Nationalism is rising in America, in Canada, in India, in Myanmar today with terrible consequences.
NBA Coach Doc Rivers: “We keep loving this country, and this country does not love us back.”

Nationalism Will Always Betray You
Who Am I To Talk About This?

“Hey, I thought that you were a videogame guy! What gives?”

If you are wondering about my qualifications to discuss this topic, I have been writing and speaking about the intersections of games and social events and history for years.

Videogames’ portrayal of the Holocaust does a disservice to both players and victims

While Auschwitz is the most notorious of them all, the Nazis established over 40,000 concentration camps between 1933 and 1945. Some were used to force Jewish, Roma, LGBT, and other minorities to work, while others were used to systematically murder those people. In Treblinka alone, approximately 876,000 people were killed, and over 800,000 of the victims of this abhorrent violence were Jewish.
The Stories of Nationalism

Too often we make history boring. It should be the stories of the men and women who lived it, real people that we can relate to ourselves. These are the stories of men and women who believed in nationalism, who dedicated their lives to the cause, but who were ultimately betrayed.

We can make a country into an ideal, we can love it, but a country will always remain a thing, a place, incapable of returning that love. This is true of all countries including Germany, America, Russia, and China. These are the stories of real people.
The Germans - Fritz Haber

• Won the Nobel Prize in 1918 for inventing the Haber-Bosch process. Saved Europe from famine.
• Also the father of chemical warfare – poison gas, Battle of Ypres.
• “During peace time a scientist belongs to the World, but during war time he belongs to his country.”
Haber and Einstein

• Haber along with Albert Einstein established the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute for Chemistry in Berlin.

• Max Planck, Werner Heisenberg, Max von Laue, and many others in chemistry and physics came out of that institution.

• Haber helped found a state-controlled company called Degesch that created a variant of hydrogen cyanide marketed as Zyklon gas.

• In 1933, Haber along with 130 other Jewish scientists was dismissed.
The Germans - Ernst Rohm

• German military officer and one of the earliest members of the Nazi Party, a personal friend of Adolf Hitler.

• A founder of the SA, the Storm Battalion, the Nazi Party militia. In 1923, it was Rohm who organized the Nuremberg rally. He led the Munich Beer Hall Putsch.

• On July 1\textsuperscript{st}, 1934, as part of the Night of Long Knives, Rohm was shot to death in his prison cell.
The Americans – Robert Oppenheimer

- Head of the Manhattan Project at Los Alamos, the “father of the atomic bomb.”
- Opposed nuclear proliferation and the development of the hydrogen bomb.
- In 1954, the FBI dug up his past associations with the Communist Party and Oppenheimer’s security clearance was pulled.
- In 1963, JFK awarded and LBJ presented him with the Enrico Fermi Award.
The Americans – Daniel Ellsberg

• Born in Chicago, raised in Detroit.
• Scholarship to Harvard, graduates summa cum laude. A year at Cambridge, then Harvard for graduate degree.
• In 1954, he enlists in the Marine Corps, discharged in 1957 as a 1st Lieutenant.
• Strategic analyst a RAND Corp.
• In 1964, he joins the Pentagon, spends two years in Vietnam.
• In 1970, having exhausted all legitimate channels, he leaks the Pentagon Papers.
The Russians – Leon Trotsky

• Born Lev Davidovich Bronstein into a wealthy Jewish family he was a Marxist.

• Sent to Siberia in 1898, he would escape and flee to London where he met and befriended Lenin.

• After the Russian Revolution, he held many positions including Commissar for the Military.

• In 1924, after Lenin’s death, Stalin would strip Trotsky of all titles and exile him.

• In 1940, he was assassinated at his home in Mexico.
The Chinese – Lin Biao

• Lin Biao (family name Lin) was arguably the most important military figure in the Chinese Civil War that resulted in Communist China.

• He led the People’s Liberation Army into Beijing.

• In 1966, he was named Mao’s successor.

• In 1971, his plane crashed in Mongolia in what became known as the “Lin Biao Incident” and he was named a traitor.
Summary

• Nationalism, Imperialism, and Communism have demonstrated histories of “eating their own.” (In one case, literally.)

• Any movement or “ism” when taken to the extreme always results in pain and suffering.

• What they don’t tell recruits to extremism is that sooner or later YOU will be the one suffering.

• “Do nothing to your neighbor that you would not want your neighbor to do to you, that is the whole of the law. The rest is commentary.” – Rabbi Hillel