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Our Country, Right or Wrong

Behind this statement is the spirit of patriotism, and opposing it is the force of collectivism. These two ideas are diametrically opposed. As motives, they can be, and generally are, both right and wrong.

It is not only a gross error but a senseless choice to stay with a sinking ship because you were a member of its crew and it was "your" ship. One should have a sense of discernment that will enable him to determine the line where he should cease to defend a lost cause, and recognize that it has faults. In like manner, it is neither scientifically nor morally right to stick with "our" country even though it is wrong. The sins should be pointed out and be amended by more than the sugar-coated gloss of patriotism.

nice phrase

On the other hand, it is not to be denied that the spirit which prompts one to defend even the weaknesses of his country is a wholesome one, irrespective of its acknowledged consequences. Think of the kingdoms that have been built, sustained, and promoted by patriotism, much less to mention the other thousands of good causes. Yes, even Christianity itself is, and has been, spread in this fashion. On an even more familiar level is the example of "school spirit". This too, is a type of patriotism and what school would be without it. Even the Communists who are extreme collectivists have cheerers at their athletic contests.

We might sum up our thoughts in this way. The understanding of this statement — our country right or wrong — depends on a proper definition of it. If we mean by it that whether our country is on the side of moral and international justice or evil that we will defend these actions, then it is wrong. However, if we mean by this statement that one should be patriotic toward his country, even though it may fall and falter, because of its overall good, then it is a good statement.

A good citizen has been defined as one who knows

where his rights end and his neighbor's begins. We might apply this to international and national patriotism as well. We could say that wholesome patriotism is the kind that spurs national interests without engendering international conflict.

Well put. If your sermons are as well thought out and as carefully and as carefully and precisely stated as this, your parishioners are indeed fortunate.