



**BETWEEN A SELF-QUESTIONING EUROPE, A SELF-ASSURED RUSSIA,
AND A HAPLESS UKRAINE:
HOW AMERICAN ARMED FORCES BECAME NATO'S FOREIGN LEGION**

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Speaking to students in St. Petersburg last January, Russian President Vladimir Putin claimed the Ukrainian army "is not an army, but a foreign legion, in this case a foreign NATO legion."¹ For going on three decades now, Russia and her apologists have used that term—*NATO's foreign legion*—mostly to deride former Soviet-era allies who joined the western alliance.² The intended epithet aside, however, the notion of a NATO "foreign legion" has a less one-sided provenance than one might think: in October 1960, for example, President Eisenhower (shortly before a NATO Council meeting) floated the idea of a strategic force under exclusive alliance control, and subject to a code of discipline and conduct like that of the French Foreign Legion.³

Running counter to Eisenhower's idea was Charles de Gaulle's defense of his *force de frappe*. In a November 1959 speech to the French Military Academy he asserted that no country could conceive of a national role without disposing independently of modern military power. During the Cold War, America's NATO allies—as a function of the United States' preponderance of strategic arms—tended more often than not to view critical strategic and political questions through the perspective of their reliance on those arms (which they did not control) and "not often enough through the perspective of shared responsibility."⁴ While strategic arms have arguably lessened in importance in Europe's changed post-Cold War security dynamic, the "shared

¹ "Putin: Ukraine army is NATO legion aimed at restraining Russia." RT [published online in English 26 January 2015].

<http://rt.com/news/226319-putin-nato-russia-ukraine/>. Last accessed 18 June 2015. His full statement read, "In fact, this is not an army, but a foreign legion, in this case, a NATO foreign legion, which, of course, does not pursue to protect Ukraine's national interests. They have different goals, and they are connected with objectives of geopolitical containment of Russia, which does not coincide with the national interests of the Ukrainian people." See: "Putin: Ukrainian army is a NATO legion." *Pravda.ru* [published online in English 26 January 2015]. http://english.pravda.ru/news/russia/26-01-2015/129617-putin_ukraine_nato_legion-0/#sthash.rOWbuCOk.dpuf. Last accessed 18 January 2015.

² For example, "For the military of the three new NATO members [the reference is to Hungary, Poland, and Czech Republic], the switch from serving the Russian empire for the US empire is seen by many as a chance for a new military career, a kind of US foreign legion." James Petras (1999). "NATO: Saving Kosova [sic] by Destroying It." *Economic and Political Weekly*. 34:23, 1417.

³ Keith W. Baum (1983). "Treating the Allies Properly: The Eisenhower Administration, NATO, and the Multilateral Force." *Presidential Studies Quarterly*. 13:1 [*The Economy in Presidential Policy*, Winter 1983], 87. President Eisenhower's specific proposal was for an "integrated nuclear strike force" as a "kind of foreign legion under exclusive NATO control." See: "Memorandum of Conference with the President: NATO Atomic Force, 4 October 1960." Cited in Steve Weber (1992). "Shaping the Postwar Balance of Power: Multilateralism in NATO." *International Organization*. 46:3, 667. <http://ir.rochelleterman.com/sites/default/files/weber%201992.pdf>. Last accessed 18 June 2015.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 85.

perspective” deficiencies persist. This is true generally in Western Europe if perhaps less so on a case-by-case basis among (some) European political leaders.

This essay sets out to address two questions. First, what of General De Gaulle’s point—that there is no national role without independent military power—which he elaborated as, “The defense of France must be French...A country like France, if it makes war, it must be its war”? The second (and related) question concerns the status of the “shared perspective,” institutionalized in NATO’s foundational *collective defense* principle. That question is a more provocative one: are American armed forces increasingly cast in the role of a foreign legion? It is asked not for the purpose of denigrating armed forces that serve alongside those of the United States. Rather, it is at its core a political question, as Stefan Soesanto of RAND Europe suggested earlier this year:

“[I]n the absence of permanently stationed forces across NATO’s Eastern flank, the Alliance’s collective self-defense posture...is being increasingly defined in political terms rather than sound deterrence strategy. True, NATO has put forward suggested increased military exercises, additional rotational forces, and the formation of a rapid response battalion. These temporarily circumvent the notion of inadequate territorial defense of NATO’s Eastern members, but do little to address the widening shortfalls of Alliance solidarity, defense commitments, and military cohesion within NATO itself.”⁵

The author makes three contentions. The first is that the direction of public opinion within the four core NATO member-states of western continental Europe—France, Germany, Italy and Spain (which we will refer to as “Euro-core NATO” for simplicity’s sake)—has moved aggressively away from both the principles articulated by General De Gaulle, and from NATO’s foundational principle of collective defense. The primary evidence for this contention is data published in a recent report by the Pew Research Center on which the author draws heavily, and which bears close reading in its entirety.⁶

The second contention is that this direction-of-change is giving rise to a new principle (of a sort)—neither Gaullist “the defense of France must be French” nor collective defense—of simply outsourcing Europe’s defense to the United States. Among its several effects, it construes American armed forces as a foreign legion of sorts, in the sense that when NATO makes war (or tries to deter it, as in Ukraine), it is largely not a NATO campaign waged collectively. Instead, it is a NATO campaign waged largely by American armed forces.⁷ With their American enforcer in reserve, Germans in particular sees their alliance role as that of a political negotiator. This is no doubt reflected in Ukrainians’ positive view (56% approval) of Chancellor Merkel, common to both western (63%) and eastern (47%) Ukraine alike.⁸

The third contention is that Euro-core NATO inaction is not reciprocated by Russia, according to data published separately by the Pew Research Center and the Levada Center (the latter a highly respected independent public opinion research organization based in Moscow). A solid 55% majority of Russians believes their country should follow its own unique “historical pathway.”⁹ That figure rises to three-quarters when one adds the option of “returning to the path the Soviet Union was on.”¹⁰ Given all this, it should come as no surprise that the Pew Research Center found a plurality of Ukrainians (47%)—and fully two-thirds in the eastern Ukraine regions bordering the Donbass—want a negotiated settlement with Russia and its separatist proxies.¹¹

⁵ Stefan Soesanto (2015). “Europe needs less soldiers—but more European ones.” *NATO Review* [published online in English 13 February 2015]. <http://www.nato.int/docu/Review/2015/Also-in-2015/europe-defense-budget-military-soldiers/EN/index.htm>. Last accessed 20 June 2015.

⁶ Pew Research Center (2015). “NATO Publics Blame Russia for Ukrainian Crisis, but Reluctant to Provide Military Aid,” (June 2015). <http://www.pewglobal.org/files/2015/06/Pew-Research-Center-Russia-Ukraine-Report-FINAL-June-10-2015.pdf>. Last accessed 18 June 2015.

⁷ The reason why is no mystery, as Stefan Soesanto points out: “The numbers speak for themselves. 25 per cent of NATO members do not have an air force, 30 per cent have no naval force or maintain a navy with less than 600 sailors, and 50 per cent are fielding an active army of less than 20,000 soldiers. NATO is an Alliance of unequals.” Soesanto (2015), *op cit.*

⁸ Pew Research Center (2015), *op cit.*, 40.

⁹ Levada Center (2015). “The Historical Path.” Published online in English 20 May 2015. <http://www.levada.ru/eng/historical-path>. Last accessed 19 June 2015.

¹⁰ These data are from survey results published in May 2015 by the highly respected Levada Center (formally, the “Yuri Levada Analytical Center”). See: “The Historical Path.” Published online in English 20 May 2015. <http://www.levada.ru/eng/historical-path>. Last accessed 19 June 2015.

¹¹ Pew Research Center (2015), *op cit.*, 39.

In such an atmosphere the salience of NATO's fundamental shared responsibility—embodied in its Article 5 duty of collective defense¹²—is increasingly incoherent. Rejecting Mr. Putin's premise in context—properly derided as “nonsense” by NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg—it is nevertheless arguable that for many Europeans who live comfortably west of the contentious eastern borderlands, United States armed forces are seen as a de facto (if with deference to American political sensibilities, unacknowledged) foreign legion. NATO member-states going back to the time of the alliance's founding have expounded the virtue of collective defense “without answering unanswerable questions”¹³ about precisely how and why NATO would go to war. Today's answer to “how” is almost certainly with a preponderantly American force, especially given the increasing willingness of Euro-core NATO to set aside De Gaulle's axiom.

It is not infrequent that a “foreign legion” of one sort or another is suggested as a means to reify the principle of collective security.¹⁴ Witness in the mid 1940s Henry Cabot Lodge's proposed “Volunteers Freedom Corps,”¹⁵ an idea taken up with alacrity by President Eisenhower to further “burden sharing” around post-war European integration.¹⁶ Why, though, an “American foreign legion”? A cynical response might lie in European experience with another one:

“More than any other of the advanced industrial states, France has been willing to engage in peace enforcement operations. Perhaps this is because, relying largely on its Foreign Legion, French political leaders have not had to be as sensitive as others to the risk of casualties.”¹⁷

The Pew Research Center surveyed public opinion in the eight most populous NATO member-states—Canada, France, Germany Italy, Poland, Spain, United Kingdom, and the United States—on questions about Russia, Ukraine, and collective defense.¹⁸

Treaty commitments are one thing; the public's willingness to see those commitments fulfilled is quite another. Pew found “at least half of Germans, French and Italians say their country should *not* use military force to defend a NATO ally if attacked by Russia” [emphasis in original]. Evincing Euro-core NATO ambiguity over perhaps *the* fundamental tenet of the alliance, outright majorities in Germany (58%), France (53%), and Italy (51%) rejected the principle in the case of a hypothesized Russian attack on a fellow member-state. To the point about an American foreign legion, consider that “All NATO member publics are more likely to think the United States *will* come to an ally's defense (median of 68%) than to be willing to do so themselves” [emphasis in original].¹⁹

¹² The principle of collective defense enshrined in Article 5 of the 1949 North Atlantic Treaty (*aka* the Washington Treaty) provides that an attack against one NATO member-state is considered an attack against all. Article 5 reads, “The Parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all and consequently they agree that, if such an armed attack occurs, each of them, in exercise of the right of individual or collective self-defence recognised by Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, will assist the Party or Parties so attacked by taking forthwith, individually and in concert with the other Parties, such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force, to restore and maintain the security of the North Atlantic area.”

¹³ The quoted text is from a 10 September 1960 telegram sent by General Lauris Norstad, USAF, to NATO Secretary-General Paul-Henri Spaak. Norstad at the time was Supreme Allied Commander, Europe (SACEUR).

¹⁴ For example, “a modest standing UN military force composed entirely of volunteers from member states, a sort of ‘UN Foreign Legion.’” Carl Kaysen & George W. Rathjens (2010). “Send in the troops: A UN foreign legion.” *The Washington Quarterly*. 20:1. <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/01636609709550237>. Last accessed 18 June 2015.

¹⁵ Lodge's proposal was based in part on his favorable reading of reports about Germany's use of disaffected Russians against the Soviet Union commanded by the infamous General Andrei Vlasov. A Soviet Army general captured in Ukraine, Vlasov collaborated with the Nazis to form the Russian Liberation Army *aka* the ROA (from *Russkaya Osvoboditel'naya Armiya*). While Lodge publicly avoided the ROA model and any mention of a “foreign legion, it is notable that the relevant file in his archived papers is titled “Notes on Shall America Organize a Foreign Legion.” See: James Jay Carafano (1999). “Mobilizing Europe's Stateless: America's Plan for a Cold War Army.” *Journal of Cold War Studies*. 1:2, fn (9) on p. 72.

¹⁶ A 1953 United States National Security Council report on the proposed Volunteer Freedom Corps cautioned (with application today in eastern Ukraine and elsewhere), “The reaction of the peoples of a nation [to] . . . a force not integrally a part of a national army and composed of several nationalities may have some bearing on that nation's position concerning the proposal.” See: USNSC (1953). “A report to the National Security Council by the Executive Secretary on A Volunteer Freedom Corps, 20 May 1953,” p. 15. Quoted in Carafano (1999), *op cit.*, fn(38).

¹⁷ Carl Kaysen & George W. Rathjens (2010). “Send in the troops: A UN foreign legion.” *The Washington Quarterly*. 20:1, 216. <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/01636609709550237>. Last accessed 18 June 2015.

¹⁸ Pew Research Center (2015). “NATO Publics Blame Russia for Ukrainian Crisis, but Reluctant to Provide Military Aid,” (June 2015). <http://www.pewglobal.org/files/2015/06/Pew-Research-Center-Russia-Ukraine-Report-FINAL-June-10-2015.pdf>. Last accessed 18 June 2015.

¹⁹ Pew Research Center (2015), 5.

This reliance is puzzling in light of the continuous drawdown of United States armed forces in Europe—from a high of 440,000 in 1957 to an all-time low of some 67,000 in 2015—which, as one commentator writes, is “negatively affecting Alliance cohesion and strategic decision-making to the point of mere status quo maintenance.”²⁰

It is not as some suggest, an expression of cognitive dissonance, evidence that Euro-core NATO at one and the same time holds two conflicting propositions—acknowledging an Article 5 collective defense duty but disinclined to commit military force to do so. Instead, much of what the Pew Research Center calls “the NATO publics” effectively eschew Article 5, and by extension, acquiesce to a capricious bipolar balance with Russia and the United States poised uneasily at opposing ends. When Pew asked, “If Russia got into a serious conflict with one of its neighbors that is our NATO ally, do you think our country should or should not use military force to defend that country?” only two, the United States (56%) and Canada (53%), answered in the affirmative. One might well ask how long those majorities will endure given fading support among many Europeans for the proposition of participating in their own collective defense.

The preferred (non Euro-core Poland being a notable exception) alternative, of course, is for the United States to balance a belligerent Russia more or less on its own. It might be said that only the United States is in a position to do so, and that NATO’s European members should forever play at best a supporting role. This largely replicates a debate from the 1940s that has continued to resurface periodically ever since. Then, George Kennan and others feared that a stark bipolar confrontation would encourage ideological extremism, which would likely take the form of “an ambitious internationalism” on Russia’s part and “isolation on the part of Americans.” Kennan argued further, “the constraints of a world with more than two centers of power would be favorable because the presence of other ‘poles’ in the system would restrain both the Soviets and the Americans from taking too many foreign policy risks and from indulging in crusades to reshape the world in their own image.”²¹

Today such crusades are more common than Kennan might have hoped (but clearly feared). One is Russia’s assault on Ukrainian sovereignty. Here, too, Pew’s findings offer little comfort. Only a “[median of 39% among NATO publics say Russia is the main culprit in the ongoing conflict in eastern Ukraine](#).” The pro-Russian separatists in Luhans’k and Donets’k (18%) are a distant second.” And less than a third of Germans and Italians believe Russia bears the largest share of the blame. Their disinclination to point fingers is not reciprocated: half of Russians say NATO constitutes a major military threat to their country.²²

Nor do most Russians share the NATO publics’ dyspeptic view of foreign affairs. President Putin enjoys overwhelming popular approval “for his relations with the U.S. (85% approve), Ukraine (83%), and the EU (82%), even as he faces sanctions from the U.S. and EU for his actions in eastern Ukraine.”²³ Russians “have an unfavorable opinion of the U.S. (81%) and NATO (80%),” and as noted, fully half see NATO as a major military threat.²⁴ This is especially troubling taken in combination with two other findings: 69% think the Soviet Union’s dissolution was bad for Russia, and 61% believe there are parts of neighboring countries that rightfully belong to it.²⁵ Many Europeans living well west of the borderlands that stretch from the Baltic to the Black Sea seem to find little to fear in Russia’s territorial ambitions. However, the message is grim for NATO allies like Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia.

Pew’s Russian survey results are both interesting in their own right, and for demonstrating how popular support among Russians for President Putin’s foreign policy has held up in the face of Western economic sanctions. Other data—these from the Levada Center—add useful, if troubling context. Over three-quarters of Russians (79%) agree with the proposition “Russia is returning its traditional role of a superpower and asserts its interests in the post-Soviet space.”²⁶

²⁰ Soesanto (2015), *op cit*.

²¹ Steve Weber (1992). “Shaping the Postwar Balance of Power: Multilateralism in NATO.” *International Organization*. 46:3, 641. <http://ir.rochelleterman.com/sites/default/files/weber%201992.pdf>. Last accessed 19 June 2015.

²² Pew Research Center (2015), 5.

²³ *Ibid.*, 28.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 30-31.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 32.

²⁶ This question was part of a lengthy poll of Russian public opinion conducted in March and April 2014 by the Levada Center. The author accessed the poll results on the Levada Center’s Russian language website at: <http://www.levada.ru/books/prezentatsiya-doklada-lva-gudkova-v-kakoi-strane-my-zhivem-rossiiskoe-obshchestvo-ot-noyabrya->

A clear majority of Russians believes the United States poses a threat to Russia (59%), that threat taking various forms including “creating obstacles for Russia’s development” (48%) and “trying to control Russia’s economy” (40%). Russians are ambiguous about whether they would prevail in an armed conflict with the United States and NATO, with only a third responding that Russia would while slightly more than half (52%) agreed that “in such a war, there would be no winner.”²⁷ There is near unanimity that the United States and NATO would not prevail (only 5% thought they would). Russians believe their country is more feared (35%), more hated (26%) and more respected (16%) by foreigners today than six months ago.²⁸

Russians clearly blame the United States and NATO (56%) and Ukraine’s political leaders (27%) for the ongoing conflict in eastern Ukraine.²⁹ Not, however, that they are following events there: over half (52%) claim to pay little or no attention to events there.³⁰ More than three-quarters expect eastern Ukraine’s political future will be different, ranging from independence (41%) to joining Russia (15%) to remaining part of a federalized Ukraine (21%).³¹ A solid majority believe Russia should follow its own unique “historical pathway,”³² begging among other questions, how many Europeans still believe, De Gaulle-like, that their own country still has one?

If Russia poses a threat to one’s country—and half the NATO publics say it does—and if one looks to the United States as a defender, then a key finding of the Pew survey ought to be especially troubling:

“U.S. defense expenditures account for 73 percent of the defense spending of the alliance as a whole. And this is among the highest proportion of total alliance security spending since the early 1950s. But only 49% of Americans express a favorable opinion of the security organization. This is unchanged from 2013 but down from 54% in 2010 and 2011. Meanwhile, the proportion of Americans who say they have an unfavorable view of NATO has grown from 21% in 2010 to 31% in 2015.”³³

Former American defense official Joseph Nye once noted, “The United States has to recognize a basic proposition of public goods theory: if the largest beneficiary of a public good (such as international order) does not provide disproportionate resources towards its maintenance, the smaller beneficiaries are unlikely to do so.”³⁴ It does not, however, perforce follow that they will, or that the American public will forever tolerate European free riders.

The Pew report clearly sounds an alarm for political leaders within the alliance’s member-states. Surely, western Europeans who believe Russia menaces the European Union’s eastern borderlands see no chance these states can defend themselves?³⁵ The coincidence of public opinion across Euro-core NATO—Germany, Italy, France and Spain—turning against a commitment to Article 5 collective defense while believing the United States will come to a NATO ally’s defense begs the question formulated by General De Gaulle: can a country conceive of a national role without disposing independently of modern military power? As observed in the aftermath of the Balkan conflict:

²⁷ Levada Center (2015). “Threats from the West.” Published online in English 10 June 2015. <http://www.levada.ru/eng/threats-west>. Last accessed 19 June 2015.

²⁸ Levada Center (2015). “Russia’s role in the world.” Published online in English 25 March 2015. <http://www.levada.ru/eng/russia's-role-world>. Last accessed 19 June 2015.

²⁹ *Ibid.* The two propositions are, respectively: “The war in Eastern Ukraine is continuing because the leadership of the US and other Western countries needs this conflict to place blame on Russia and restrain Russia’s growth and influence in the world and elevate their own ideals”; and “The war in Eastern Ukraine is continuing because the current leadership of Ukraine needs the war atmosphere to distract its citizens from the real economic and social problems in the country and preserve its grip on power.”

³⁰ Levada Center (2015). “The Ukraine Crisis.” Published online in English 10 June 2015. <http://www.levada.ru/eng/ukrainian-crisis>. Last accessed 19 June 2015.

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² Levada Center (2015). “The Historical Path,” *op cit.*

³³ Pew Research Center (2015), 19.

³⁴ Joseph Nye (1999). “Redefining the national interest.” *Foreign Affairs*. 78:4, 27-28. <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/1999-07-01/redefining-national-interest>. Last accessed 19 June 2015.

³⁵ Pew found the percentage of Europeans who believe Russia is a major threat to its neighboring countries (aside from Ukraine) ranged from a low of 38% in Germany to a high of 70% in Poland, with the rest clustered in a 44%-53% range. The corresponding figure in the United States is 59%, and in Canada, 44%. See: Pew Research Center (2015), 17.

“[A]n important force for European unity in foreign policy—perhaps even a precondition—is American prodding...In European circles, the extent to which the US becomes a regulator of the EU’s almost natural tendency towards national hypocrisy in foreign policy remains underappreciated.”³⁶

If the Pew findings are to be believed, the United States is perceived by growing shares of the NATO publics as less a regulator than an enabler of this national hypocrisy. In another observation coming out of the Balkan conflict, Douglas Hurd noted pithily, “out of Kosovo came the bitter saying that the Americans fight the wars while Europe does the dishes. That is not a sound basis for an alliance.”³⁷

General de Gaulle’s point notwithstanding, much of Euro-core NATO today *does* conceive of a national role without disposing independently of modern military power. That role is best summarized in a third quote coming out of the Balkan conflict:

“Troops and weapons did not stop the violence. What did was the hope provided by the EU that it would intervene in starting political negotiations.”³⁸

Perhaps, but where has that curtailed, rather than accommodated or appeased, Russian aggression? One should hasten to add, that “national role” is in fact a transnational one; it is European, not one of individual NATO member-states. And to add as well another Balkan conflict legacy, *viz.*, “intense American irritation with the failure of EU countries to put up the money and forces needed...to make a meaningful contribution to security.”³⁹

Amidst a self-questioning Europe and a self-assured Russia sits a hapless Ukraine. Large majorities in Germany (77%), Spain (66%), Italy (65%) and France (59%) oppose supplying it with arms, and majorities in Germany (54%) and France (53%) oppose its bid for European Union membership. On the other side, fully 83% of Russians support President Putin’s Ukraine policy and blame the Ukrainian government for the violence in eastern Ukraine. Only about half of Ukrainians (45%) blame Russia for the violence in eastern Ukraine, a comparable share (47%) seeing Russia as a major threat.

Lacking support in core-Euro NATO, it is no surprise that a plurality of Ukrainians (47%) beyond the Donbass and Crimea—and nearly two-thirds (65%) of Ukrainians in the regions bordering the eastern Ukraine conflict zone—say the best way to resolve the conflict in the east is to negotiate a settlement with the separatists and Russia.⁴⁰ However, one-half of Ukrainians seek the *status quo ante bellum*—the Donbass to remain part of Ukraine on the same terms as before the crisis—while only 11% of Russians do, with 59% favoring the Donbass’ independence or annexation to Russia.

In the past, as Malcolm Chambers observed, “The Alliance successfully deterred Soviet adventurism in western Europe in part by allying the Kremlin’s concerns about an overly independent and powerful West German state.”⁴¹ It is not unreasonable to infer that today the German and French publics in particular for similar reasons choose to frustrate Ukraine’s ambitions of EU and NATO membership. If so, Janusz Lewandowski’s recent comment that Europe is seen as a “continent of mistrust” is quite understandable.⁴²

Core-Euro NATO willingly applies a Clausewitzian rule in the case of Ukraine that it seemingly does not comprehend may apply to it as well. “One country may support another’s cause,” Clausewitz maintains, “but will never take it so seriously as it takes its own.”⁴³ Its seemingly perverse faith that the United States will backstop Article 5 collective defense is well captured by James Holmes’ acerbic reformulation of Clausewitz’s postulate:

³⁶ John Peterson (2001). “US and EU in the Balkans: ‘America Fights the Wars, Europe Does the Dishes?’” European University Institute Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies (RSC No. 2001/49), 4.

³⁷ Douglas Hurd (2001). “Europe must respond to the arc of danger.” *Financial Times* [published 28 March 2001], 23.

³⁸ The 2001 statement by Arben Xhaferi, a leading ethnic Albanian Macedonian, is quoted in Peterson (2001), *op cit.*, 1.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 21.

⁴⁰ Pew Research Center (2015), 12.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 14.

⁴² Andriy Portnov (2015). “Europe, not just Ukraine, is at war.” *New Eastern Europe* [published online 15 June 2015].

<http://www.neweasterneurope.eu/interviews/1624-europe-not-just-ukraine-is-at-war>. Last accessed 20 June 2015.

⁴³ Carl von Clausewitz (1832; 1989). *On War*, Michael Howard & Peter Paret, eds. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), 603. The full quote reads, “One country may support another’s cause but will never take it so seriously as it takes its own. A moderately-sized force will be sent to its help; but if things go wrong the operation is pretty well written off, and one tries to withdraw at the smallest cost.”

“A country never attaches as much value to its own cause as its stronger ally does. It sends a moderately sized force to its own help; but if things go wrong the operation is pretty well written off, and the ally bears the brunt of its defense.”⁴⁴

Where does this leave NATO? It is, as David Robinson wrote two-plus decades ago, a very odd alliance.

“Without some nuclear basis, no European force can protect against this long-term, vague, merely potential threat of a disruption of any European balance of power. This is the case for NATO. It is entirely negative. It relies on no positive quality of NATO but on the inherent weakness of all alternatives. NATO has only three virtues: (1) it already involves the United States and Canada; (2) it is already a nuclear alliance—indeed it is, though it hates to admit this, primarily a nuclear alliance; and (3) the military organizational structure of NATO has a special value for the stability of central Europe.”

“These arguments for NATO are not good arguments. They do nothing to overcome the obviously preferable desire for genuine and egalitarian collective security. They are simply real-world arguments that cannot be overcome.”⁴⁵

The Euro-core publics’ unwillingness to do what is necessary to fulfill Robinson’s third virtue—stabilizing central Europe—is certainly not lost on President Putin, witness Russian actions in the Baltics, Ukraine, Transdnistria and elsewhere. Perhaps Western security interests would be best served if Americans and Russians alike never read the Pew and Levada reports, if those reports were safely locked away until the Euro-core publics sort out their apparent existential crisis.

⁴⁴ James R. Holmes (2014). “A Clausewitzian View of NATO.” *The Diplomat* [published online 10 September 2014]. <http://thediplomat.com/2014/09/a-clausewitzian-view-of-nato/>. Last accessed 20 June 2015.

⁴⁵ David Robertson (1991). “NATO’s Future Role: A European View.” *Proceedings of the Academy of Political Science*. 38:1 (The New Europe: Revolution in East-West Relations), 173.