



Written by [Gary Benoit](#) on May 21, 2021

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Get U.S. Out of NATO!

When the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was formed in 1949, there were 12 founding members, including the United States. Today, there are 30. And in the future, additional countries may still be added to the military alliance, including Ukraine.

Though many may believe that the expansion of NATO reduces the likelihood of war, the reality is just the opposite. Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty, which established NATO, states that the member nations “agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all.”



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Other NATO members: Canada and United

Statesmichal812/iStock/GettyImagesPlus

In 1949, this meant that the United States, by becoming a party to the treaty, had pledged to come to the defense of 11 other nations should any of them be attacked. Today, under this same treaty, the United States is committed to come to the defense of 29 other nations should any of them be attacked.

These expanding commitments increase, rather than decrease, the likelihood of the United States, as well as other nations, being pulled into a war.

Some of the countries the United States has pledged to protect in the event of an attack are well known, such as France, Germany, and the United Kingdom; others not so much. The latter category includes the two most recent nations to join the military alliance: Montenegro (in 2017) and North Macedonia (in 2020). How many Americans would be able to locate these countries on a map? How many know that



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they were once part of communist Yugoslavia?

Should America go to war if (say) North Macedonia is attacked? Would it be in our national interest to do so? How about if a much bigger and more influential country such as Germany were attacked?

How about if Russia and Ukraine were to become embroiled in a war, and that war were to spill over into one or more of the NATO countries? Should the United States go to war then? Of course, if Ukraine were to become part of NATO, an attack on Ukraine would then obligate the United States to come to its defense under the North Atlantic Treaty — regardless of what the U.S. Congress or the American people might think.

Smaller countries belonging to NATO could be more aggressive and more likely to instigate a war if they know that the United States will back them up — sort of like a small kid picking a fight with a bully because he knows his older brother will protect him.

In truth, the decision to commit American blood and treasure to fight another war in Europe, or anywhere else for that matter, should be decided by the United States. It should not happen automatically, based on treaty obligations that, if adhered to, deny the United States that choice.

Nor is it just the written agreement that subverts our country's ability to determine its own destiny. More than three-quarters of a century after the end of World War II, the United States still maintains many tens of thousands of troops in Europe to defend NATO member nations. An attack on a NATO member nation resulting in American casualties would necessarily interject our country into a military conflict, without any action on Washington's part.

To avoid America becoming unnecessarily entangled in another foreign war, we should get the United States out of NATO and bring the troops home. If, on the other hand, our country really should go to war, that decision should be made by the United States itself — specifically the U.S. Congress, as required by the Constitution's declaration of war provision — not by multinational treaty obligations or foreign interests.

Why Does NATO Still Exist?

NATO was founded during the Cold War for the stated purpose of countering the threat from the Soviet Union and its Eastern European bloc of captive nations. The Soviets responded to NATO by forming their own military alliance, known as the Warsaw Pact.

The Warsaw Pact no longer exists. In fact, a number of countries that were once members of the Warsaw Pact have since become members of NATO. They include Albania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland, and Romania. East Germany, another Warsaw Pact nation, unified with NATO-member West Germany. And the Czech Republic and Slovakia, which were part of Warsaw Pact-member Czechoslovakia prior to its dissolution, have also joined NATO.



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Warsaw Pact military exercise in 1980

Even the Soviet Union no longer exists. Socialism may still reign in parts of the old Soviet Empire, but tragically socialism is also advancing in the West, including in Western Europe and the United States.

The bottom line is that the rationale for the creation of NATO in 1949 no longer applies. This raises the question: Why does NATO still exist? And why is the United States still in it?

Turkey's NATO membership

Turkey might be considered a “surprising” member of NATO, since it is a transcontinental country straddling Europe and Asia. Geographically, most of the land area of Turkey is in Asia. And culturally, the vast majority of the population are Muslims, unlike the European countries that have been historically Christian. Turkey is also strategically located, serving as a gateway from the volatile Middle East to Europe. As such, Turkey could become another hotspot for Middle Eastern terrorism and even outright war, requiring U.S. intervention under NATO.

Will Ukraine join NATO?

The strengthening relationship between NATO and Ukraine suggests that Ukraine's one day joining NATO is a very realistic, perhaps even likely, possibility. “Relations between NATO and Ukraine date back to the early 1990s and have since developed into one of the most substantial of NATO's partnerships,” NATO's website (NATO.int) boasts. “Since 2014, in the wake of the Russia-Ukraine conflict, cooperation has been intensified in critical areas.” And in case anyone doubts that this cooperation is now a trajectory toward Ukrainian membership in NATO, NATO also approvingly states on its website: “In September 2020, [Ukrainian] President Volodymyr Zelenskyy approved Ukraine's new National Security Strategy, which provides for the development of the distinctive partnership with NATO with the aim of membership in NATO.”

With Ukraine in NATO, the prospect of the United States being pulled into a war over the Russia-Ukraine tensions would intensify. Not that U.S. military interventionism in Ukraine could not come about anyway, prior to Ukraine's joining NATO — after all, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken, a member of the world-government-promoting Council on Foreign Relations, traveled to Kyiv in May to signal U.S. support for Ukraine.



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What if?!

What if foreign forces massed along America's borders? What if huge armies from hostile foreign powers deployed along our borders with Mexico and Canada, while military armadas patrolled our coastlines just outside our territorial waters? How would Americans feel about this? Such a deployment would undoubtedly heighten, not reduce, tensions — and the same applies to our deployment of troops in Europe.



Antony Blinken, right, with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. (Photo credit: AP Images)

Instead of militarily entangling ourselves in Europe and elsewhere throughout the world, America would be much safer if we were to bring the troops home and follow George Washington's wise observation: "To be prepared for war is one of the most effectual means of preserving peace."

Why can't Europe defend Europe?

Germany, France, Great Britain — why can't the great countries of Europe defend themselves, without American treasure and troops? Why has the United States historically provided a disproportionate share of the resources for Europe's defense? In reality, of course, America's gargantuan military assistance over many decades has alleviated the need for European countries to provide adequately for their own defense, and even enabled them to shift more resources to their economic sector and better compete against America in the international marketplace.

The NATO-UN Connection

NATO was established as a "regional arrangement" under the United Nations Charter (Articles 52-54). It also reports to the UN Security Council. Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty specifically states that any "armed attack [against one or more NATO members] and all measures taken as a result thereof shall immediately be reported to the Security Council. Such measures shall be terminated when the Security Council has taken the measures necessary to restore and maintain international peace and security."

Council on Foreign Relations member Dean Acheson, who was U.S. secretary of state when NATO was formed, said in a speech in 1949 that NATO was "designed to fit precisely into the framework of the United Nations" and that it is "subject to the overriding provisions of the United Nations Charter."



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What About Congress and the constitution?

Under the U.S. Constitution, Congress is delegated the power to “declare war.” This important constitutional power is circumvented by the North Atlantic Treaty’s Article 5, which requires the United States to consider an armed attack against any NATO member as an attack against the United States.

Putting American troops under the command of NATO is putting them under UN command. Yet many Americans who would oppose transferring U.S. troops to UN command support U.S. participation in NATO, not realizing that this is doing essentially the same thing. It is time for America to disentangle our military from both NATO and the United Nations, and to withdraw U.S. membership from both entities.



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