



ORIGINAL PAPER

The Influence and Role of the United States of America in Ensuring the Military Security of Central and Eastern Europe

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Abstract

The aim of the article is to present a military threat in the region of Central and Eastern Europe and measures to prevent the war. The author outlines alternatives showing that the security of this area largely depends on the presence of the American forces. Destabilisation of Ukraine and annexation of Crimea by Russia is not only a threat to Kiev but to the whole Central and Eastern Europe. For Central and Eastern Europe, the possible merger of Russia and Belarus is dangerous. Donald Trump's administration is involved in security issues in Central and Eastern Europe. NATO summit in Poland in 2016 was to take the appropriate steps in response to Russia's aggressive policy. It was agreed that the North Atlantic Alliance states would allocate more money in defence. This idea, pushed by the Moscow, does not have full support in Minsk. Since the United States is a key country in NATO, many countries over the last few decades have sought to be „protected” by it. The decision of the permanent presence of the American troops on Polish territory is only one of the elements of ensuring security, not only of this country, but of the whole region. Other measures should continue to be implemented to increase it. The following methods will be used in the text: document analysis (books, journalism, internet), historical and comparative method.

Keywords: *military security; USA; Russia; army.*

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Imperial policy of the Russian Federation as threat to the stability of Central and Eastern Europe

Since the beginning of the 21st century, the actions of the Kremlin and Vladimir Putin have been coordinated and thought-out actions, aimed at causing confusion and division of the European continent. The example could be the European Union, which cannot present a unified position on energy policy. Moscow plays with the states, pursuing a policy that will be consistent, inter alia, with their national interests, often without considering other entities. In this case, the Nord Stream gas pipeline, which connects the Federal Republic of Germany and the Russian Federation, makes European solidarity a contractual and theoretical issue, on which there are no sound grounds, taking into consideration rather individual projects.

Why should one be afraid of Russia? The answer is very complex. First of all, the Kremlin's actions are aimed at reactivating the Soviet Union, an example of which is the attempt to connect the Russian Federation with Belarus. If this happens, then Central and Eastern Europe may border with two places with the capital in Moscow.

The second reason is the powerful espionage network, which may consist of outgoing Russians who search a better perspective of their existence.

Lucas states, that "The Russian diaspora's presence in the West reflects one of the great triumphs (...). [F]or Russia's spymasters, targets and means of espionage overlap in this diaspora." (Lucas, 2013: 102-103). In most cases Moscow controls its citizens giving them a false sense of freedom and the scope of said freedom depends closely to their willingness to cooperate. This way Moscow was able to create a great number of individuals who became spies without actually knowing it. Nowadays, people from Russia are free to travel abroad, study, live or even get marry there and this gives a great opportunity to collect information almost about each aspect of life. Being a part of another society, these people are able to steal and transfer gathered information to Moscow, who can use them against its opponents. There is no way to escape or to object because being a Russian obligate to serve the country and if there is no will to cooperate Moscow is able to bully or even blackmail its citizens (Lucas, 2013: 102-103). It clearly points to far-reaching goals that result in the holistic destabilization of the Western world. The introduction of chaos is conducive to Moscow, because it can implement all its previously set tasks. Thus, geopolitics and geostrategy are changing.

The third reason refers to Russia's actions towards the Ukrainian state, which are oriented not only to 2014. A comprehensive action plan could have appeared already at the beginning of the 21st century. In this place the presidential election in 2004 and the event called the Orange Revolution should be recalled. How to understand it? Chodakiewicz is of the opinion, that "It was an endeavour to put the nation on par with the Baltics in terms of democratic development. It dealt a serious, if not yet lethal, blow to post-Communism." (Chodakiewicz, 2013: 301). In the name of the Orange Revolution many opposites have arisen at different levels. The aura of the whole event was compared with the emotions accompanying the period of struggle for independence in the years 1988 - 1992, however, society began to show some bipolarity. It can be said that the revolution was taking place on several levels. Oligarchic and post-communist circles opposed each other. The country was divided east and west, nationalists stood against post-communists. Although not all the elders opposed the revolution, and not all the younger ones supported it, a clear division was established between the approach of young and old. The Orange Revolution has also become an opportunity to express citizens' dissatisfaction with bureaucracy.

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The mentioned event of 2004 was a reaction to powerful violence, threats against candidates and large-scale election fraud. The supporters of the Orange camp were afraid that Viktor Yanukovich, the man of the communist nomenclature, would be the obvious choice and the next head of the Ukrainian state. Those who acted dynamically at lower levels were concerned about the assassination attempt that was carried out on Yushchenko. It is worth noting, that he was the main presidential candidate in September 2004. At that time, in the country there was a national mobilization of students and youth members. The most powerful optimism was present in western Ukraine and the most important event related to the Orange Revolution took place in the capital city. It was in Kiev that peacefully minded crowds gathered to protest against post-communist actions. When the information about Yanukovich's majority in the election appeared, it was demanded to recount the votes and to repeat the election. The protesters put forward a list of proposals of an economic, social and cultural nature. Among them, the most significant were the transparency of the public life and the fight against corruption. Taking a position against communism or anti-communism was the determinant of almost everyone. The election was repeated, and Yushchenko became the president in January 2005, thus the supporters of the Orange Revolution changes could declare Ukraine's victory (Chodakiewicz, 2013:301-302). Viktor Yanukovich appears in Russian policy in 2013 – 2014, when he rejects the possibility of rapprochement with the European Union. Protests in Kiev led to an even greater division of Ukraine, into pro-Western and pro-Russian parts. The consequence of the escalation of this division was the annexation of Crimea in 2014, which obviously affects not only the military security of Ukraine, but also the countries of Central and Eastern Europe.

In the context of aggression or ruthless attack and a panacea, which is an alliance of member states within the North Atlantic Alliance Marszałek states, that “the potential opponents may be both traditional states and other entities (...) which have sufficient capabilities and methods (...) There is (...) no doubt that, cooperation and coordination, appear to be fully justified and desirable” (Marszałek, 2013: 32, own translation).

The USA foreign policy during the presidency of Donald Trump

Foreign policy can be seen as the interaction of two matters - the external priorities, which must or at least should be the result of the internal social views. Such a combination, although difficult but possible, requires long and continuous consultative work, as a result of which a uniform position emerges. The form of a given policy depends, among others, on who is currently ruling the country. The example could be the administration of Barack Obama, who until 2014 (destabilization on the territory of Ukraine and the annexation of Crimea) largely focused on the Asian continent. Apart from the mentioned area, Donald Trump's office is oriented on what is happening in Europe, with particular emphasis on the Central and Eastern region. Another issue concerns the social moods within a given entity. If citizens think that foreign policy is going in the wrong direction, then the authorities change their priorities, thus wanting to show that they are listening to the social voice.

What are President Trump's priorities in foreign policy? Paterson notes, that “in many ways, President Trump's policies mimic those of Republican Presidents Reagan and Bush (...). His foreign policy preference is motivated by U.S. unilateralism (...)” (Paterson, 2018: 39-40). Unlike his predecessor, Trump focuses exclusively on the politics of his own country, showing less interest in international organizations such as

the United Nations or the International Criminal Court. He prefers individuality, without becoming dependent on various groups. In his own policy, however, he does not stay away from contacts with other leaders, such as Putin, Al-Sisi, Duterte or Erdogan.

The conduct of a specific foreign policy is the responsibility of each state and it must be in line with the priorities which result, for example, from the electoral program. Current world events revise some of the statements in the above quote and cause a redefinition of the approach of the President of the United States himself to even countries such as Russia. The new US president also means new allied expectations of entities included in Central and Eastern Europe.

The United States of America and the North Atlantic Pact as a guarantor of military security

The US responsibility for military security has not always been so obvious. It was caused by thinking that Europe drew conclusions from the devastating World War II, which was to result in the formation of European Communities unifying countries, mainly economically. However, no external threats were foreseen, which have been gaining momentum since the end of the 20th century.

Since the Marshall Plan came into force, the United States has positioned itself as a proponent of the process of European integration, which appeared to be the most practical and appropriate method of maintaining the stability on the European continent. The Americans believed that the level of political integration is asymmetrical to the dynamic development of the common market. The aim of the United States was to create a politically and militarily strong Europe as an ally that could become an area consolidating international order under their leadership. This continent was to support democracy, the rule of law, fight for respect for human rights and cooperation aimed at peace and global security. Only an integrated Europe could take the real responsibility, leading to political and military relief for the USA (Popowski, 2014:99).

The European countries set the economic aspect as their priority, since it was the most important in the context of integration. It was designed in the 1950s, leading to the formation of a common internal market, which covered coal, steel, and brought peaceful nuclear utility. The defensive issue along with defensive policy were not considered as the essence of the European project for a long time. In the first period of existence, the European Communities could not be treated by the US as a partner in an important field of security, because it was only after 1970 that the entities belonging to it started cooperating in the context of foreign policy under the project: European Political Cooperation. The opportunity to talk within the institution about political and economic issues in the field of security, excluding defence, does not begin until the 80's. A bold attempt from the early 1950s to form European troops within the European Defence Community (EWO) ended in failure due to the opposition of the French National Assembly in 1954 to the ratification of the treaty signed by France, Germany, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg. As a result, the problem of re-arming Germany, which was important for Americans, was unable to solve. It was significant considering the possibility of implementing the Korean variant in Europe, i.e. the surprising aggression of the Soviet Union, which would recall the outbreak of the Korean War in 1950. The establishment of the Western European Union (WEU) in 1955 – military alliance – helped to solve the problem of rearmament Germany by implementing a system of controlling upper limits of militarization and the number of armed forces. The first major dispute between the United States and European countries

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on the security has been completed. The Americans were of the opinion that the establishment of the German army was an indispensable element in relation to the policy of prevention, while European countries were uncertain about the opportunity for the creation of German military units, being aware that it was this country that caused the outbreak of World War I and World War II (Podraza, 2017:12).

The North Atlantic Pact, of which the USA is the main component, determines the security of the entire organization. Europe is the area that is particularly vulnerable, namely its central-eastern part.

In the context of improving security not only of the United States but also of Europe, George W. Bush, who was pushing for the construction of the missile shield in Poland and the Czech Republic, should be mentioned. Such action would secure not only these two countries, but also the entire Central and Eastern region.

Thinking of the deployment of components of the missile system, the USA seriously considered the European area. This would undoubtedly work in favour of the United States' defence assets against a possible ballistic missile attack from the Middle East, and would also increase Europe's defence capability, and thus the security of the North Atlantic Pact, by strengthening transatlantic solidarity, thereby uniting American and European interests in the field of said security. In addition, the transfer of knowledge and information in the field of new technologies, or the opportunity for the North Atlantic Pact to use the American detection system infrastructure as a part of the futuristic NATO defensive system is the obvious benefit. Placing elements of the anti-missile shield on the European continent would have deterred potential aggressors from developing the arsenal of ballistic missiles, or enforcing them from other countries. This would allow better implementation of the proliferation policy tasks set by the USA and Europe (Danielewska 2008:114). Danielewska notes, that "the proposal (...) concerned a battery of interceptors (...) in the underground launchers and a tracking radar (...). The placement of the first of these elements was planned in Poland, the second - in the Czech Republic" (Danielewska 2008:114, own translation).

Currently, there are no elements of the missile shield in Central and Eastern Europe – is it worth returning to this idea? Undoubtedly, any action improving and thus increasing the security of the state is desirable and appropriate, which is why the missile shield project should be restored. Each sovereign state should have the right to make decisions in accordance with its own national interest. In addition to this, a consensus needs to be developed in the context of the defence of various entities, while maintaining a balance related to the national interest of each country.

Comfort and the sense of security in Central and Eastern Europe significantly weakened after the activities of the Russian Federation. In this regard, it is necessary to mention not only the military aspect, but also an extensive hacker activity that significantly weakens the IT system of the given country. However, sticking to the military thread, Popowski notes, that "under the influence of events in Ukraine, Europeans and Americans have realized that transatlantic structures (...) are at greater risk than previously assumed" (Popowski 2014:103, own translation). Aggression against Ukraine has shown how much threatened are the values that have, until now, been recognized as widespread in Europe. In his policy, Putin unintentionally led to close cooperation between NATO and the European Union (Popowski 2014:103).

Banasik claims, that "the crisis in Ukraine has prompted the Alliance not only to raise readiness for collective defence, but also to verify NATO's defence mechanisms (...). In the context of the operations in Crimea (...) one can ask whether the Alliance is

prepared for such activities” (Banasik 2015:56, own translation). Due to the new form of operations that are far from open military operations, it should be noted that they are more difficult to recognize and qualify as potentially threatening. Such activities took place during operations in Crimea and, having gained the name of a new war, made recognition of the actual aggressor difficult (Banasik, 2015:56). The question related to the readiness and response to the actions of a potential aggressor is very justified, especially in the context of a possible consolidation of the North Atlantic Pact. The fact that currently no country must deal with this problem is extremely positive, but one should always be prepared for a dramatic scenario that obviously does not have to happen.

Taking into consideration the fact, that the North Atlantic Pact is seen as an enemy, nowadays it is extremely difficult to reach an agreement in the fight against terrorism. John McCain, the Senator of the Republican Party as well as the candidate for president in 2008, expressed his opinion on the aggressive attitude of the Russian Federation, claiming that this country, using force against its neighbours and energy blackmail, is like a fuel institution that creates the appearance of a state (Leszczyński, 2016: 97).

What are the capabilities of the organization mentioned above? Leszczyński notes, that “(...) Alexander Vershbow reminded that NATO is also a nuclear power capable of responding adequately to Russia, if its leaders decided to use weapons of mass destruction” (Leszczyński 2016:99, own translation). Analysis of actions, in this case, of Putin and an attempt to identify his intentions in order to prepare actions adequate to the situation turns out to be crucial (Leszczyński, 2016:99). A strong and decisive response from this representative of the North Atlantic Alliance is dictated by the unbelievably aggressive intensity of the Russian Federation action. Although, the dialogue is very important, the attacker must be aware that in the name of global order protection there is a group of countries or international organizations that are determined to fight for peace.

The development of the North Atlantic Pact is designated by meetings of its countries leaders. These meetings do not have a predetermined schedule. Recently, they have taken place about every twenty-four months, although in the long history of the Alliance there have been longer periods of downtime (e.g. the Cold War period). There were also opposite situations, when the frequency of these events was more intensified (four meetings took place in 1989–1991). The reason for this was the willingness of the North Atlantic Pact to undertake proper adaptation measures, setting out new NATO tasks in the new post-Cold War reality beyond collective defence. During the NATO summit in Warsaw, five sessions were held at the level of heads of state and heads of government. The first meeting was to discuss the main defence strategies of the Alliance and to refine the details of the presence of troops on the eastern flank. The next session concerned cooperation between NATO and Russia, as well as potential threats from the East. The third raised the issue of cooperation with Afghanistan and funding for Afghan security forces. The fourth meeting focused on southern activities and migration issues. The last session was devoted to the support of Ukraine (Pietrzak & Soloch, 2016: 13-14). Especially, the last session is crucial, not only for Ukraine, but also for the whole Central and Eastern Europe, and the deterrence and defence are a clear signal to Russia that this area is prepared. It should be also remembered that both the United States and the entire North Atlantic Pact must be vigilant not only in the military aspect, because the potential threat may at first look like a provocative act.

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At present, the United States is putting a certain dam on the imperial aspirations of today's Russia, because any aggression on the territory where American soldiers are located can be used, or even treated as a way to unleash a military conflict. Thus, Moscow will not take aggressive measures, fearing of the clash with Washington. The presence of American troops in Poland will greatly weaken aggressive actions towards this country, excluding it from Russia's military range (Kamiński & Kuczyński 2019:9). Kamiński and Kuczyński are of the opinion, that "this project constitutes a response to the situation in the west, as Russian President Vladimir Putin was the first one to make a move when expanding his country's military capabilities in the vicinity of NATO's borders" (Kamiński & Kuczyński 2019: 9-10). According to the authors, the creation of an American base in Poland should be considered in the category of defence activities. The last few years have shown that abstaining from this kind of action leaves Moscow free in its movements, encouraging more and more intrusive steps. Russia's expansion seems to be a matter of time, and US troops in Poland will not have any influence on this. However, additional armed forces will undoubtedly strengthen NATO's defence potential on the eastern flank (Kamiński & Kuczyński, 2019: 9-10).

Poland belongs to the eastern flank, which the Americans decided to strengthen in 2014 by implementing the Atlantic Resolve operation ("Wojska USA w Polsce," 2019). It means the presence of both the US Army and the North Atlantic Pact in the indicated area in order to conduct the exercises, and the possibility of unrestricted movement and taking specific actions. In this operation, it is also important that the US does not forget about its obligations in the context of security – sending clear impulses to authenticate the military strength of the US and NATO (Sheffer, 2018: 2). In other words, it is important to support European allies in relation to the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Units designated for this operation arrive for nine-month shifts, and armies exchange in a smooth manner ("Wojska USA w Polsce," 2019). As it can be seen, "construction of the base in Redzikowo, which will be one of the European points of the American missile defence system, is underway" ("Wojska USA w Polsce," 2019, own translation). Thus, Poland as an important location contributes to increasing the security of both Warsaw, but also the countries of the region, as it was mentioned earlier.

Conclusion

The concern of every authority should and must be the sovereignty of the state. Anxiety and difficult times force to take specific actions of the broader nature of prevention. Military exercises and the constant presence of the US Army in Poland contribute to an increased sense of security in this case especially in the area of Central and Eastern Europe. In order for the protection to be fully comprehensive, there is a need for multi-pronged measures, which cannot be temporary, because, in this case, the destabilization actions of Russia, directly or indirectly affecting the security of the said region, lasts for about ten years. Vigilance and modernization of armies, in this case concerning the European continent, must constantly be in progress. One cannot disregard signals or symptoms, otherwise what was a priority and challenge for the ancestors of the countries of the aforementioned area, for modern generations may already become a history. The negligence in the context of the military actions of a potential aggressor, which in the area of Central and Eastern Europe is the Russian Federation, is the worst thing that can happen. Inaction demobilizes and causes that thinking about security is only in the sphere of illusion, which is why continuous

improvement, caution and careful observation of the actions of the opponent or opponents is so important.

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