ECPR KEYNOTE LECTURE

why is europe peaceful today?

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Abstract
This talk attempts to explain Europe's peacefulness since the Berlin Wall fell. The core argument is that this tranquility is mainly because of Europe's relationship with the United States, which has changed little since the Cold War ended. America continues to act as Europe's pacifier by keeping substantial military forces in the region. Moreover, many European countries have been helping the United States police the globe, which focuses their attention outward, not on each other.

Keywords American pacifier; NATO; peace in Europe; Francis Fukuyama

I would like to thank Mick Cox for his kind introduction and for inviting me to give the keynote address to the ECPR. I would also like to thank all of you for coming out tonight to hear me speak. As you know, we are about to celebrate the twentieth anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, one of the most momentous events in modern history.

Much has happened since then, including the dire economic crisis that we are now experiencing. It promises to have far-reaching effects on European life. Nevertheless, I think that the most important development of the past two decades is the fact that Europe remains at peace.

Of course, there were a handful of small wars in the Balkans during the 1990s, but the major European powers did not start them, did not exploit them for national gain, and with the help of the United States ultimately managed to shut them down. Very importantly there has been no war between any of the major powers. Indeed, there has been little security competition among them.

Given Europe's tumultuous history, this is quite remarkable. Remember that from 1900 to 1990 Europe was the site of two of the deadliest wars in recorded history followed by the Cold War. The broad sweep of European history certainly looks very different from the past two decades.

What explains this recent shift from conflict to peace? Why has Europe been so peaceful since 1989? That is the question that I would like to try to answer tonight. Some might think that this is not an interesting issue, because it is obvious that war has been burned out of Europe and that situation is simply not going to change. I would not bet on that proposition. Nothing is forever in international politics and it behooves all of us to understand how we got where we are so we can know what the future might hold for us.

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Let me now turn to the question at hand. One might say that the answer is simple: the Soviet Union collapsed and absent that threatening superpower, the remaining states in Europe no longer have to worry about their security. The problem with that argument is that dangerous European states have been defanged before – think about Napoleonic France, Imperial Germany, and Nazi Germany – but afterwards the major powers still found ways to compete and sometimes fight with each other. So I don't think the fall of the Soviet Union can account for Europe's peacefulness.

I believe that the explanation lies in Europe's relationship with the United States, which has changed surprisingly little since the Cold War ended. Indeed, one might argue that the trans-Atlantic relationship has grown stronger since the fall of the Berlin Wall.

This relationship has two dimensions that foster peace. First, America has continued to serve as Europe's pacifier by maintaining a significant military presence on the continent and keeping NATO intact. Second, most Europeans have not only welcomed America's continued presence in their midst, but they have largely accepted the idea that the United States has a moral and strategic responsibility to run the world. In fact, the Europeans – especially the British – have even been willing to help the United States police certain areas of the globe, which effectively means that Europe's major powers have been too busy worrying about threats in Central Asia and the Middle East to have much time to worry about each other.

Let me expand on each of these points starting with America's role as Europe's pacifier.

When the Cold War ended and the Soviet Union moved its troops out of Eastern Europe, I predicted that the United States would follow suit and exit Western Europe, which would lead to

'Why has Europe been so peaceful since 1989?'

security competition among Europe's major powers (Mearsheimer, 1990a, b). But the United States did not leave Europe and it did not allow NATO to expire. Instead, it kept its military forces in Europe, albeit at lower levels than during the Cold War, and it moved NATO eastward, so that it now includes all of the countries in Eastern Europe that were once important members of the Warsaw Pact: the Czech Republic, East Germany, Poland, and Slovakia. In fact, some states that are now in NATO – Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania – were once part of the Soviet Union itself.

America's decision to stay in Europe and continue to run NATO much the way it did during the Cold War has done a great deal to facilitate stability in Europe. The reason is simple: the United States is by far the most powerful country in the world and it effectively acts as a night watchman. Its presence on this continent means that there is little chance that any two states in NATO will fight against each other, simply because the United States would not tolerate it. This means that France and Germany can live peacefully together and not have to worry about the balance of power between them, as they had to do for much of their history. Given that NATO has expanded far to the east, this means that a huge swath of Europe has been pacified by Uncle Sam's presence.

The United States enhances European stability in another important way. It extends its security umbrella over all of the states in NATO, which means that countries like Germany and Poland do not have to worry much about a possible threat from non-NATO countries like Russia. Very importantly, Germany, which

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has no nuclear arsenal of its own, does not have to worry about Russia's nuclear weapons, because America's nuclear umbrella covers Germany. In short, the United States not only protects NATO countries from each other, it protects them from serious threats that might come from outside of NATO.

I am sure that some of you do not find my argument convincing and instead think that there is no serious chance of war in Europe and thus there is no need for the United States to maintain its continental commitment. The truth is that we cannot know whether you are right or I am right until US troops are pulled completely out of Europe and NATO is disbanded. If Europe remains at peace after an American withdrawal, you will be proved right. But if serious security competition breaks out, I will be proved right.

I would note, however, that most of your leaders think that it makes eminently good sense to maintain a significant American military presence in Europe. No European leader over the past two decades has uttered the words: 'Yankee, go home!' And there is no indication that is likely to happen anytime soon. Even the Russians want the United States to stay in Europe and to maintain NATO, in good part because they do not want to see Germany provide for its own security. What the Russians don't like is NATO expanding up to their borders, which is certainly understandable from their perspective.

Why is there so much interest in keeping the United States militarily engaged in Europe? Because most Europeans – and Americans for that matter – think that the world's remaining superpower plays the key role in keeping the peace in Europe. Take away that Leviathan and there is likely to be big trouble. Otherwise, why keep American troops here?

There is a second reason why Europe is peaceful and it has to do with how Europe and the United States think and act toward other areas of the world. Most Americans believe that their country has both a moral and strategic responsibility to intervene in the daily life of countries all around the globe. And they are sometimes willing to use military force to achieve their ends.

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This kind of thinking is not just found among neoconservatives and Republicans; it is widespread among Democrats as well. Remember, it was Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, a Democrat, who said: 'If we have to use force, it is because we are America. We are the indispensable nation. We stand tall. We see further into the future'. And it was Madeleine Albright who remarked to Colin Powell, when he was Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, 'What's the point of having this superb military that you're always talking about if we can't use it?' And don't forget that many liberal Democrats supported the Iraq war; indeed, none of Barack Obama's principal foreign policy advisors opposed the decision to invade Iraq in March 2003.

Given Europe's bitter experiences with colonialism in the latter half of the twentieth century, one would think that most Europeans would be opposed to America's imperial mission. While I would think that many of you share that sentiment, most of your leaders do not. They seem willing to act as America's junior partner in trying to run the world. Britain, of course, is the best example of this kind of behavior. Consider that the United

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States has started or intervened in five wars since the Cold War ended – Iraq (1991), Bosnia (1995), Kosovo (1999), Afghanistan (2001), and Iraq (2003). Britain has fought side-by-side with the United States in each of those conflicts.

But it is not just Britain that supports America's ambitious foreign policy. NATO, after all, is concerned with fashioning itself so that it can fight 'out of area', which it is doing in Afghanistan. In fact, there are troops from twenty-eight NATO countries in Afghanistan. And when the United States invaded Iraq in March 2003, it took along a 'coalition of the willing' that included Britain, Denmark, Poland, and Spain. Within a year after the invasion began, small contingents of troops were sent to Iraq by the Czech Republic, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, and Romania – all NATO members. Then in December 2004, NATO set up a training mission in Iraq.

One might challenge this line of argument by noting that two of Europe's heavyweights, France and Germany, opposed the Iraq war and have not sent troops there. While that is true, it is not because Berlin and Paris were opposed to meddling in Iraq's affairs. Instead, French and German leaders felt that war made no sense in the late winter of 2003 because Saddam Hussein had allowed UN weapons inspectors into Iraq and there were good reasons to think that the inspectors were capable of determining whether or not Iraq had WMD – which was supposed to be the critical issue at the time. The French – as many of you remember – were willing to go to war with Iraq if the inspectors discovered WMD and Saddam refused to surrender them. Germany probably would not have joined the war in that case, but it surely would not have tried to stop it.

Germany, however, has sent troops to Afghanistan, although they have stayed away from the heavy fighting there. Nevertheless, the German military has recently become embroiled in a controversy in Afghanistan that indicates the extent to which even the Germans have been willing to support America's liberal imperial agenda. One week ago, the German army called in air strikes on two fuel trucks that were hijacked by the Taliban. The bombing attacks, which were carried out by American planes, killed somewhere between 70 and 130 people, including many civilians. This attack, which was hardly the first of its kind, has caused serious problems for NATO with the Afghani people and their leaders.

It has also caused trouble inside the alliance. The *Wall Street Journal* reported this past Monday (8 September) that: 'A US-German rift over a deadly airstrike in Afghanistan … escalated, as US commanders accused the German military of undermining guidelines that seek to avoid civilian casualties. US military officials questioned why the German army had called in an airstrike when German troops weren't under fire from insurgents, as well as German forces' intelligence that led them to think civilians wouldn't be hurt' (Walker *et al*, 2009).

What is remarkable about this situation is that it is the German military – not the American military –that is under fire for using air power carelessly and killing large numbers of civilians. The United States, after all, is usually the culprit when incidents of this sort occur. And American aircraft did carry out the bombing attack for the Germans. All of this goes to show the extent to which Germany and the United States are working together to shape daily life in Afghanistan.

There are other cases – especially in the Middle East – where Europe and the United States have been working jointly to deal with potential trouble. For example, Britain, France, and Germany have all been staunchly supporting Washington's

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campaign to prevent Iran from acquiring the capability to enrich uranium, even though Tehran has the right to do so as a signatory of the NPT – provided, of course, that it does not produce weapons grade uranium.

Moreover, where there were once significant differences between Europe and the United States over the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, there is no longer much difference between how American and European leaders deal with that conflict. Leaders on both sides of the Atlantic praise the two-state solution, urge Israel to stop building settlements, condemn Palestinian terrorism, and side with Israel when it gets in a shooting war with the Arabs. This is not to deny that the Europeans occasionally level criticisms at Israel, but so does the United States. European leaders, however, are unwilling to get tough with Israel; instead they follow America's lead when dealing with the Israelis and the Palestinians, just as they do when dealing with other trouble-spots around the globe.

What is going on here? Why are European leaders willing to act as America's junior partner in running the world? Why has Europe bought into America's liberal imperial mission?

Obviously, the long experience of the Cold War helped Europe and the United States learn to work closely together, and it helped the Europeans learn how to follow America's lead on security matters broadly defined. Nevertheless, there is something more profound going on here. Europe, I would argue, has been Americanized over the past 65 years. Let me explain.

There is a rich scholarly literature in the United States on what is called 'American exceptionalism'. Probably the most famous book of that genre is *The Liberal Tradition in America* by Louis Hartz, which was originally published in 1955 (Hartz, 1955). He argues that what makes America special is that it has been a thoroughly liberal country since its founding. It was born liberal because it did not have a feudal tradition like Europe – which meant that America had no real left and no real right. Communism and fascism never stood a chance in the United States, not just because it was so liberal, but also because that liberalism was profoundly intolerant of other political ideologies. Europe, Hartz argued, was fundamentally different; because it had a feudal past, it had a real left and right.

While that description of Europe's political spectrum was true for most of its history, it is not true anymore. The right – in its fascist form – suffered an egregious set of defeats during WWII, and then during the Cold War, Portugal and Spain went from being right-wing dictatorships to democracies. The left, on the other hand, suffered a devastating defeat when communism collapsed in 1989, although that particular ideology had lost much of its appeal before the Berlin Wall fell. In practice, this meant that the communist parties in Western Europe had no future, at least as real communist parties. And, of course, the former communist countries in Eastern Europe desperately wanted to become liberal democracies like their neighbors to the west.

In effect, there was no viable alternative to liberal democracy in Europe after the Cold War. Hartz's description of America now applied to Europe.

These new circumstances are reflected in Francis Fukuyama's famous 1989 article on 'The End of History', in which he argued that liberal democracy had triumphed over fascism in the first half of the twentieth century and communism in the second half of the twentieth century and that liberal democracy no longer faced a serious ideological challenger (Fukuyama, 1989). To quote Fukuyama, 'What we may be witnessing is not just the end of the Cold War, or the passing of a particular period of postwar history, but the end of history as such: that is, the end

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point of mankind's ideological evolution and the universalization of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government.'

Fukuyama was careful to argue that liberal democracy had not yet triumphed in every area of the world. He wrote, for example, 'Clearly, the vast bulk of the Third World remains very much mired in history, and will be a terrain of conflict for many years to come'. But he was clear that liberal democracy had triumphed in Western Europe, and, of course, it had always been the reigning ideology in the United States. Fukuyama's article certainly came in for a lot of criticism, but I do not know of anybody who seriously argued that he was wrong about the triumph of liberal democracy in Western Europe.

This triumph had two important consequences for Europe. First, it facilitated trans-Atlantic cooperation in Europe itself as well as in other regions of the world. The United States and Europe now spoke the same political language and tended to see the wider world in similar terms, all of which made it easier for them to cooperate with each other in joint endeavors. Birds of a feather stick together. Second, many Europeans came to share the triumphalism of Fukuyama, although they were certainly more modest with their rhetoric than the Americans, who seem to never miss an opportunity to brag about their superior virtues. Still, there is little doubt that the Europeans looked at what they had built in the 45 years since World War II and concluded – with considerable confidence – that they had found the magic formula.

Of course, the obvious next step was to make Eastern Europe look like Western Europe, which is why both the EU and NATO have expanded eastward over the past 20 years. The aim was to create a common European home. It did not take long, however, before this line of thinking led many Europeans to push for promoting liberal democracy in regions outside of Europe. After all, if you have the magic formula, why not share it widely and make other areas of the world prosperous and peaceful like Europe. However, once you start thinking in those terms, you are out on that slippery slope that leads to liberal imperialism.

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For sure, Europeans were more reluctant than Americans to embrace the imperial mission, and they were much more wary than their friends from the New World about using military force to spread liberal democracy. The Europeans have a rich history of telling non-Europeans how to run their lives – and it was not for the most part a happy story. Moreover, the Europeans do not have much power projection capability, so they were in no position to spread liberal democracy at the end of a rifle barrel. In the end, however, those considerations did not matter much because Europe could follow America's lead and Washington would not ask them to do much fighting and dying. Europe would be America's junior partner as they worked together to spread liberal democracy into conflict-ridden regions like Central Asia and the Middle East.

The most important consequence of this implicit bargain to do large-scale social engineering with the Americans is that the Europeans got themselves involved in brutal and unwinnable wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Fortunately for you, your leaders have had the good

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sense to get out of Iraq almost completely. But unfortunately for you, European troops are still stuck in Afghanistan, in a war that shows no signs of ending anytime soon.

One benefit of Europe's decision to fight in Afghanistan and Iraq – and there are hardly any – is that the countries of Europe have been so pre-occupied with fighting insurgents abroad that they have had hardly any time to worry about each other. In other words, when it comes to thinking about security, Europeans look outward not inward. In a perverse way, that situation facilitates peace in Europe. At the same time, America's campaign to make the world safe for liberal democracy has not led to a weakening of its commitment to Europe, which means that the American pacifier – which is the main cause of peace in Europe – remains firmly in place. Not surprisingly, Europe has enjoyed unprecedented peace over the past 20 years.

There are naturally alternative explanations for why post-Cold War Europe has been so peaceful. Let me briefly consider what I think are the three main competitors to my story.

First, there is the claim that the absence of serious conflict is because of the fact that the EU has helped to transform how Europeans think about their identity. Most Europeans, so the argument goes, have left behind their national identities and adopted instead a European identity. In other words, they think of themselves as Europeans, not as Italians or Germans. This new identity naturally has an effect on how the countries in the EU think about their interests. Europeans tend not to think in terms of that old-fashioned concept we call the national interest. Instead, they emphasize what is good for Europe as a whole, and downplay what might be best for their individual countries. In effect, Europe has been turned into one big family where there are spats for sure, but family members do not countenance killing each other.

Survey data show that this explanation cannot be true, because a clear majority of Europeans have not abandoned their national identities in favor of a European one. This is clear from examining Eurobarometer data for the past 20 years. The surveys ask the question: In the future, do you see yourself as European only, European plus your nationality, your nationality only, or your nationality plus European. Let's consider the responses for Britain, France, Germany, and Italy. I will use the data for 2004, which is similar to the data for every other year since the Cold War ended.

For Britain, 8 per cent think of themselves as either European only or as European plus British. On the other hand, 62 per cent think of themselves as British only and 27 per cent think of themselves as British plus European.

For France, 14 per cent think of themselves as either European only or as European plus French. On the other hand, 29 per cent think of themselves as French only and 54 per cent think of themselves as French plus European.

For Germany, 14 per cent think of themselves as either European only or as European plus German. On the other hand, 38 per cent think of themselves as German only and 46 per cent think of themselves as German plus European.

For Italy, 11 per cent think of themselves as either European only or as European plus Italian. On the other hand, 28 per cent think of themselves as Italian only and 56 per cent think of themselves as Italian plus European.

In short, roughly one out of every ten people in the biggest four countries in the EU can be said to privilege European identity over national identity.

A second explanation also ascribes Europe's peacefulness to the EU, although it focuses on rules not identity. Europeans, according to this line of

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argument, have produced a tightly knit economic and political entity – 'Europe' – in which the rules discourage thinking and acting along national lines. There is no room for security competition and war among the countries in this highly interdependent and well-integrated system, simply because they do not have either the inclination or the maneuver room to cause each other trouble. After all, why would anyone break the rules and start trouble when the EU is making everyone richer by the year?

There are three problems with this explanation. First, there is no question that the EU has done much to foster economic growth and to get European states to surrender some elements of their sovereignty and engage instead in joint decision-making. But that process has begun to break down in recent years as economic growth has slowed and EU members have shown an increased willingness to break the rules. Watching the various EU countries respond to the present economic crisis, one does not have the sense that it is a closely knit institution. Indeed, most of the countries often appear to be acting unilaterally to further their own national interest, sometimes at the expense of other members.

Second, the EU has failed to produce its own foreign and security policy. Nor has it developed an integrated military force of its own. Instead, the principal instrument for providing security in Europe is NATO, which is an American-led institution. European integration has been impressive for sure, but not so impressive that it has stopped its members from acting like sovereign states. And as we move further and further away from 1989, the ties that bind in that institution look more and more fragile.

Finally, Russia is not a member of the EU, which means that this line of argument about the virtues of rules cannot account for the absence of security competition between Germany and Russia, which are not only the two most powerful states in Europe, but also have a rich history of competing with each other in Eastern Europe.

The third alternative explanation is that peace has broken out because Europe has democratized and – as democratic peace theory teaches us – democracies do not fight other democracies. I have my doubts about the explanatory power of this particular theory, but even if it is true that democracies hardly ever fight with each other, it cannot account for Europe's remarkable stability over the past 20 years. Why? Because Russia is not a democracy in any meaningful sense of that term, which means that democratic peace theory cannot account for the absence of conflict between Germany and Russia over Eastern Europe.

In short, I do not think any of these alternative explanations are compelling. Peace in Europe in my opinion is due mainly to the fact the United States continues to dominate the security environment on the continent and to a lesser extent by the fact that Europe – which has been Americanized over time – is anxious to help the United States run the world.

I would like to close with some remarks about the prospects for maintaining peace in Europe in the years ahead. It is not clear where we are headed, but the best way to think about the future is to focus on three critical issues. Let me start with what I think is the least important – the future of the imperial mission, which, for Europeans, means the future of 'out of area' operations.

I believe that the United States is going to lose the war in Afghanistan as well as the war in Iraq. The liberal imperial mission was doomed from the start, and I find it remarkable that so few Americans understand this obvious fact.

Furthermore, I believe that most European countries will pull their troops out of Afghanistan in the next year or two. And, as I said, the Europeans are already

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out of Iraq. The Americans, on the other hand, will probably remain in Afghanistan and Iraq for many years to come. The United States will do everything it can to forestall defeat in those conflicts, and that means staying there for the long term.

Europe's unhappy experience with imperial policy will probably be the death knell for employing NATO 'out of area'. It is hard to imagine NATO getting involved in another Afghanistan anytime soon. More generally, it seems likely that Europe will have little enthusiasm in the years ahead for helping the United States try to run the world. This reluctance to help the world's self-appointed sheriff will anger at least some Americans who will feel that the Europeans have left them in the lurch in both Afghanistan and Iraq. And it will not be good for NATO, because failure is rarely good for any institution. It will also cause the Europeans to look inward rather than outward, which will not be helpful for tranquility in Europe.

The second critical issue before us concerns the US commitment to Europe. Specifically, what does the future hold for the American pacifier? This is a hard question to answer because the available evidence does not point clearly in one direction or another.

For the past 70 years, the United States has cared greatly about three areas of the world: Europe, Northeast Asia, and the Middle East, especially the oil-rich Persian Gulf. For sound geo-political reasons, Europe has long been the most important of those three regions. But that situation is rapidly changing with the rise of China in Asia and America's deep-seated commitment to maintaining a significant military presence in the Middle East. Europe is probably the least important of those three regions for the United States today, and it is likely to become less important over time, which is not to say that it will become unimportant.

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There is another important dimension to America's geo-political situation: the state of the world economy. We are now undergoing the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression of the 1930s. It appears that we have avoided another depression, but still, the damage to our economies has been enormous and it is unlikely that a full recovery will happen anytime soon. Indeed, it looks like the recovery will be slow and painful, and, of course, one can never be sure that we won't go back in the other direction. In this economic environment, the United States is sure to look for ways to reduce, or at least slow down spending on defense.

All of this is to say that in the face of an increasingly powerful China, continued trouble in the Middle East, and a slow and painful end to the great recession, it is possible that the United States will leave Europe to concentrate its limited resources in Asia and the Middle East.

It is also important to note that the United States has traditionally acted as an off-shore balancer in Europe. In other words, it has stayed out of Europe unless there was a potential hegemon that could not be contained by the other European great powers. The only exception to that pattern is what has happened since 1989 when the United States opted to stay in Europe even though no country threatened to dominate the continent. In short, America's present relationship with Europe is highly unusual and, one might argue, not in the US national interest.

However, there are also good reasons for thinking that the United States will

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stay in Europe. Most of the American foreign policy establishment remains determined to continue trying to run the world – despite all our troubles in Central Asia and the Middle East – and keeping peace in Europe is high up on the establishment's agenda. Furthermore, one can make a strong case that it is in America's national interest to keep the peace in Europe, although that logic has not always been compelling in the past. And one can also argue that although Northeast Asia and the Middle East are now strategically more important than Europe for the United States, the fact is that Uncle Sam is rich enough that he can maintain substantial military forces in all three regions.

It is difficult to say how this will turn out in the long run, although it seems clear that the United States will remain in Europe over the next decade.

This brings me to the third critical issue – the Russian-Ukrainian relationship – which I think is the greatest potential source of trouble in Europe today. Russia does not have good relations with Ukraine and there is no reason to expect them to improve in the foreseeable future, especially since Ukraine wants the Russian military to leave the Crimean Peninsula when its lease expires in 2017, while Russia will surely want to remain there. NATO has made a bad situation worse by foolishly threatening to bring Ukraine into the alliance, a move that the Russians consider threatening to them and therefore unacceptable. I am not arguing that war between Russia and Ukraine is likely, but it is not out of the question, as Russia's war with Georgia in August 2008 shows. Great powers care deeply about the security arrangements on their borders, and Russia is no exception in that regard.

If there were signs of serious trouble between Russia and Ukraine, not to mention actual fighting, this would have a profound effect on how the countries in Eastern Europe and Germany think about their security. It would surely heighten tensions between Germany and Russia and cause Germany to worry about further Russian moves to increase its influence in Eastern Europe. Increased security competition would surely become the order of the day in Eastern Europe.

The nature of that security competition, however, will depend heavily on whether the United States remains in Europe and NATO remains intact. If that happens, a clash between Russia and Ukraine should not lead to wider conflict, mainly because the American security umbrella would extend over the rest of Europe, making it impossible for the Russians to move further westward. And, of course, NATO members, to include Germany, could rely heavily on the United States to protect them.

But if the American pacifier is not there in the event of trouble between Russia and Ukraine, not only will the Russians have less to fear if they expand westward, but the Germans would have to provide for their own security. This would surely set off an intense security competition between Germany and Russia for control and influence in Eastern Europe. Again, one does not want to underestimate the extent to which great powers care about their border areas.

It would also give Germany cause to think about acquiring its own nuclear deterrent. Remember, they would no longer be under the American nuclear umbrella and nuclear weapons are the ultimate deterrent. This would create a dangerous situation, as the Russians would have powerful incentives to prevent Germany from going nuclear.

This brings me to my bottom line, which is straightforward. The two most important factors in determining the future prospects for peace in Europe are one – whether serious trouble erupts between Russia and Ukraine – and two –whether

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the United States remains firmly committed to staying in Europe and running NATO. Obviously, you should hope that Moscow and Kiev can settle their differences peacefully, but if they don't, you should hope that the American pacifier remains in place so as to prevent even more trouble. Thank you.

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