

Nonsensical escalation

11 July 2018

Regarding the president's absurd military expenditure demands today:

The U.S. spends \$610 billion on defense every year; China 230; Russia 70; Europe 230.

It seems the president urges Europe to increase spending to \$550 billion; China to 380; and Russia to decrease expenditure to 48, should the ratio of 3.1% of GDP applied unilaterally by the U.S. suddenly become the universal norm.

Will peace be better served by a steep worldwide escalation of military expenditure, or rather by an overall reduction of military spending?

To preserve peace, shouldn't the aim rather be a reduction of U.S. military spending down to \$250 billion; China's down to 160; and Russia's down to 25; Europe being stable at 230, and everyone spending 1.3% of GDP?

The notion that Europe has to increase her military spending, instead of the U.S. decreasing hers, is not analyzed by the president. By the same token, why not demand that the U.S. apply the same ratio as her ally Saudi Arabia, thus escalating U.S. military expenditure to \$2,000 billion? I am sure some industrialists would applaud.

Three more comments:

1. Europe spends most of her \$230 billion defense budget in the North Atlantic theatre. How much of her \$610 billion does the U.S. spend for their NATO obligations only?
2. Since Russia is NATO's overwhelming adversary and spends less than \$70 billion on her military expenses, what exactly is the rationale for NATO to spend \$1,160 billion, up from the already disproportionate 840? Isn't Russia playing on us the same trick we played on her during the Cold War?
3. Are we sure the military-industrial complex, of which Dwight Eisenhower warned the world in his January 1961 farewell address, almost 60 years ago, is not well alive and at play in the c-i-c's tantrum?

M

12 July 2018

The president, never missing an opportunity to make an absurd statement, just declared that the share of GDP he wants Europe to spend on defense is now 4%.

Accordingly, U.S. military spending should escalate, if I understand correctly, to \$770 billion, and Europe's to 700, (with China now having a free rein to go to 480 and Russia remaining at 70).

Someone needs to explain why Europe and the U.S. need to spend nearly \$1,500 billion together to protect us from Russia and China who spend right now a combined \$300 billion.

If we follow the reasonable policy of always trying to see things from the other party's standpoint, how are we going to expect the public of Russia, our official Public Enemy No. 1, with their meager \$70 billion military budget, to concur with us that they are the aggressor, despite our combined forecast spending of \$1,500 billion, more than 20 times theirs. Even if they teamed up with China, we'd still outspend them 5 to 1.

Military contractors the world over, rejoice. As for the rest of us, let's either dig burrows or make it a priority to get rid of lunatic tribunes.

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12 July, 2018

Listening again to the president ranting against Europe and Germany.

Europe has a population of 350 million; Russia has 150. Europe outnumbered Russia 2.3 to 1.

Europe spends currently \$230 billion on military expenditures, Russia 70. Europe outspends Russia more than 3.3 to 1.

Russia has 6,800 nuclear bombs in her arsenal, Europe 500, less than a tenth of Russia's but surely enough for deterrence. For reference, China has less than 300, India and Pakistan 100 each, North Korea 15, and Israel perhaps 400. A nuclear offensive against Europe on the part of Russia would dreadfully threaten the U.S. directly, NATO or no NATO, and she would retaliate with her 6,600 warheads, only to defend herself.

On what basis does the president claim he is protecting Europe? What exactly would be the rationale for Russia attacking Europe? So far, NATO has expanded much more in Eastern Europe than Russia, which has retreated overall.

It is ironic to hear the president bitterly complain that the U.S. is spending too much on her military, when on the other hand he is doing everything he can to increase, not decrease, U.S. military expenditures.

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