

Fight-or-Flight Fact Check

March 30, 2022

“Majority of Americans Would Stay and Fight if Russia Invaded U.S.,” read *Newsweek*’s headline for its report earlier this month about a Quinnipiac University poll.

Overall, “55 percent said they would stay and fight,” the article informed, “while 38 percent said they would flee the country, like the over 1.5 million people who have fled Ukraine as Russia continues its attack on Ukrainian cities and villages.”

Yet, the fact-checker kept the case open, suggesting that perhaps folks had also misunderstood the question. “Indirect evidence” of this “can be surmised” by the response to another question . . .

The Quinnipiac survey asked, “If you were in the same position as Ukrainians are now, do you think that you would stay and fight or leave the country?”

“Looking at political affiliation,” *Newsweek* noted, “Republicans were more likely to say they would stay and fight, with 68 percent saying they would do so, as opposed to 40 percent of Democrats.”

Yet, weeks later, *Newsweek* delivered a fact check to readers concerning a claim made in a social media



post: “60% of Democrats say they wouldn’t fight if America was invaded.”

Their fact-checker rated it false, because only 52 percent of Democrats said they would “leave,” with 8 percent not sure. Case-closed.

Yet, the fact-checker kept the case open, suggesting that perhaps folks had also misunderstood the question. “Indirect evidence” of this “can be surmised” by the response to another question: “If Russian President Vladimir Putin goes beyond Ukraine and attacks a NATO country, would you support or oppose a military response from the United States?”

“In this hypothetical, 88 percent of Democrats were supportive of a military response,” the fact-checker noted, “more than both Independents (77 percent) and Republicans (82 percent).”

But hold on . . . supporting a military response by *others*, thousands of miles away, is not the same thing as deciding to personally fight an invading army.

It’s a fact. Check it.

This is Common Sense. I’m Paul Jacob.