

Liberal Party dialogue – The internal tensions affecting the Ukraine

Part 1 - "Break the Brinkmanship over Ukraine

During the Cuba missile crisis of 1962 there was no question of the sovereignty of Cuba stopping the USA demanding there be no nuclear missiles in their back yard
With my basic understanding of Russian history, the fear of encirclement and enemies on its doorstep must be at least understood.

So if we are to reduce regional tensions then some understanding and space for Russian concerns must be made.

Equally Putin's dream of New Russia and the dissecting of the Ukraine by force must be abandoned.

Already there are comfortable solutions.

Little noticed Bulgaria has joined by NATO but to ensure good will is kept with Russia it has rejected any attempt for forward bases or missiles to be deployed on its territory.

If Russia respected the right of other countries like Sweden and Finland to join NATO if they wish to without an assurance on no NATO bases or missiles then we have a win around.

The case of Ukraine is unique it has for a very few periods in its history been a country and for significant periods was divided between the Polish Lithuanian Commonwealth and Russia.

That cultural and political divide can be seen in the Ukraine even today between Ukrainian and Russian Speakers members of the Orthodox and Uniate (Greek Orthodox Church's aligned to Rome).

The reality is either the Ukrainian government allow plebiscites in each province to determine they remain Ukraine or join Russia, or the Ukrainian Government make a determined effort to respect the aspirations of its Russian minority.

As inspired by the Chatham House report "

Steve Radford, leader of the Liberal Party

Part 2 - An extract from Ukraine-Russia relations, Orysia Lutsevych & Jon Wallace, November 2021

“Many Ukrainians believe Donbas could be resolved in the shorter term. Ukraine will not agree to absorb it on Russian terms – which would mean special status for the ‘people’s republics’ with a veto power over Ukrainian foreign policy – recognizing this would be a bomb Russia could set off at a time of its choosing.

Ukrainian strategy is to focus on achieving a sustainable ceasefire and to work with its partners France and Germany in the Normandy Format to compel the Russian government to withdraw support to its proxies and allow for gradual safe reintegration of the region into Ukraine. ”

“ Compromise by Ukraine and rights to the Eastern Provinces would undermine Putin's case to his own people. Assurances on deployment of missiles could be a counterweight to closer economic ties by Ukraine with EU maybe falling short of membership”

The full article can be accessed at

<https://www.chathamhouse.org/2021/11/ukraine-russia-relations>

Part 3 – A historical overview of the eastern Ukrainian conflict

As an amateur historian with an interest in Russian history covering WW1, the 1917 Revolution and the subsequent Civil War there is a deep historical context to this region of eastern Ukraine.

It was the first part of the Ukraine to industrialise in the late 19th Century with mass migration into the region from Greater Russian, seemingly displacing much of the local population. It declared for the Bolsheviks in 1917 and was their launchpad for the invasions of Ukraine in 1918 and 1919.

The majority of the population now see themselves as belonging to Greater Russian creating a dispute revolving around geographic sovereignty via ethnic demographics.

According to a brief read of Wikipedia the Crimea was annexed by Russia in 1783 and only incorporated into the Ukraine in 1954 and this was consolidated after Independence in 1991.

In the immediate aftermath of the 2014 Ukraine Revolution the Crimea was occupied by the Russian Federation and a referendum held which overwhelmingly voted for unification with Russian. The legitimacy of the vote has been challenged by the Ukrainian Government and the UN subsequently voted to confirm Ukrainian sovereignty.

Arguably much of the regional tension is to do with President Putin’s attempt to re-create the Soviet Union. That entity was from its creation simply a recreation of the previous Tzarist Empire under the guise of a federation of Soviet Republics to avoid the obvious charge that the new Communist regime were themselves simply imperialist empire (re)builders.

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