

# News From Ukraine

Russian Invasion of Ukraine

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The Euromaidan Book

In addition to the webinar, mentioned earlier, all contributors will be getting a copy of the Euromaidan Book, that I completed in 2016 but never published. For those who haven't contributed, and would like a copy of the Euromaidan book, please click [here](#).

To have a full understanding of what is happening in Ukraine today, how society has organized to fight the Russians, and their willingness to continue fighting regardless of what happens with U.S. assistance, it is necessary to understand what the events that took place during Euromaidan, when Ukraine became a nation.

I was in Kyiv during the entire time of Euromaidan. The book is 147 pages. Included in the book are the following:

- My commentary of events I was witnessing.
- The emails that I sent out during Euromaidan, starting on the day that over 400 protestors were beaten up by Yanukovich's Interior Ministry police, the event that started Euromaidan.
- Interviews with key figures who helped organize and sustain Euromaidan, including those responsible for designing and building barricades, how private vehicles were used during

Euromaidan, called “Auto Maidan,” organizing First Aid stations and makeshift hospitals.

- How support from cities outside Kyiv was organized.
- A large collection of articles and YouTube videos that help tell the story of what happened. Here are two samples – [a view of approximately 1 million protestors from atop the “Christmas Tree;”](#) [the speech that set in motion Yanukovich’s departure from Ukraine.](#) (NOTE: the coffins contain the bodies of protestors who, the day before, were murdered by snipers on Institutska Street.

I invited the people whom I interviewed to my 70<sup>th</sup> birthday party, held in Kyiv in October 2016. Most came. My birthday party was the first time many of them had ever met each other. Euromaidan was a revolution without a leader, and it served as a template for several subsequent revolutions.

For those who have already contributed, I will be sending the book out via email in the next few days. For those who would like to contribute, but haven’t already, you can contribute in any amount and also be included in the webinar that we plan to host later this month.

I have only shared this book with a very limited number of people, perhaps 5 in all. After the webinar, I have no plans to send out further copies of the book (unless I find a publisher).

**If you would like to participate in the discussion and receive the Euromaidan book, please make your contribution in any amount, in any currency, and from anywhere in the World [here](#).**

#### The Crimea Primer – An Addition

Since sending out the Crimea Primer earlier this week, one of our earliest email recipients, a distinguished member of the Ukrainian Diaspora and a major supporter, kindly provided me some additional background on the circumstances surrounding the 1954 transfer of

Crimea from the Russia Soviet Socialist Republic to the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic. Effectively, this blows up the Russian narrative, embraced by Trump, that Crimea is Russian land and rightfully belongs to Russia.

Here is what he said:

Robert,

Very good Crimea material. I would add to the reasons for the transfer the following:

- After WWII there was a massive reconstruction/development task in Crimea, both as a result of the Nazi hostilities/destruction and of the fact that the agricultural potential was massively underdeveloped.
- In those days the USSR was less centralized than later, and the republics had more independent authority, responsibility, and finances as to economic planning and management.
- For Russia the task would be a logistically and managerially distant burden and financial drain, with no foreseeable benefit for the Russian republic.
- Moreover, the Russian republic had no experience or expertise with the type of agronomy/agriculture that would be needed, and, flowing from this, not the agronomists, etc who could lead the agricultural development (of Crimea).
- Ukraine, on the other hand, possessed overlap in required expertise, was close to Crimea, and, importantly, had the water to irrigate the arid fields.

So, the Soviet politburo (not Khrushchev personally) decided to transfer Crimea to Ukraine, and in doing so killed three birds with one stone:

- Freed Russia from a financial drain and impossible managerial task by laying it off onto Ukraine,
- Made a rational management restructuring decision, and,

- Created a positive PR event celebrating “300 years of Russo-Ukrainian friendship.”

**This was not Russian magnanimity. It was offloading onto and saddling the Ukrainians with a burden that Russia didn't want.** (my emphasis)

Today Russia is claiming that Crimea was always Russian land, when in fact the Russian Soviet Socialist Republic, the predecessor to today's Russian Federation, offloaded Crimea to the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic. They did so, because the Russian Soviet Socialist Republic was unable, or unwilling, to make the necessary investments to improve Crimea's economy. Today, after the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, and later independent Ukraine, made the needed investments, including the North Crimean Canal that brought surface water to Crimea, Russia is now claiming that Crimea has always been Russian land.

In 1954 it was Russia itself that gave up Title to Crimea and they passed the Title to Ukraine. 60 years later Russia attempts to take it back, by force, on the grounds that Crimea has always been Russian territory, and Russia gets the Trump Administration to buy into the narrative.

### Pope Francis I – Rest in Peace

Pope Francis I had a complex relationship with Ukraine. This article from the Euromaidan Press, entitled [“The Pope Who Couldn't Name Evil: Francis's Struggle With Russia's War on Ukraine,”](#) describes the evolution of Francis's feelings about the War and Russia's role.

Earlier today, I watched the funeral of Pope Francis I. As impressive as the service was, to me it was not nearly as impressive as the procession held in late July, 2018, commemorating the 1,030<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Christianity arriving in Ukraine. To mark the day,

there was a procession of members of the clergy of what became the Orthodox Church of Ukraine from St. Sophia's Cathedral down Volodimerska Street in Kyiv to St. Vladimir's Cathedral. The procession was over 1 mile long. Most of the clergy who marched were dressed in elaborate gold vestments.

I watched the procession with a delegation of financial experts and government officials from Ethiopia. Ethiopia is an Orthodox country. We watched from near Golden Gate Fountain. I arranged for their visit to Ukraine to meet with officials from the National Bank of Ukraine, Ukraine's Parliament, Ministry of Economy, and 2 equipment lessors.

In retrospect, what made the procession that day more impressive than Pope Francis' funeral was what happened approximately 6 months later when, for the first time in over 300 years the Ukrainian Church received its independence from the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, Moscow Patriarchate (UOC-MP), becoming the Orthodox Church of Ukraine.

This event has marked yet another break between Ukraine and Russia. The Trump Administration should understand the significance of what happened in 2018, rather than continuing to buy into Putin's narrative that Russians and Ukrainians are "one people."

Pope Francis I had a complex relationship with Ukraine. The break with the UOC-MP likely added to the complexity. During the early part of his Papacy Francis was focused on repairing the schism between the Catholic Church and the Eastern Orthodox Church. It is likely that Francis I saw the emergence of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine as an independent church as an impediment to his goal. There was the famous meeting that took place in 2016, between Francis I and Patriarch Kirill of the UOC-MP. It was the first meeting between a Catholic Pope and a Eastern Orthodox Patriarch in

approximately 1,000 years. The meeting took place in the Business Class Lounge in the Havana Airport.

The following excerpts from the article in the Euromaidan Press serve to describe the evolution Francis's thoughts about Ukraine:

- In December 2023, as Ukrainian soldiers from the 93rd “Cold Yar” Brigade struggled to fund reconnaissance drones for their operations against Russian forces, a mysterious donation appeared. Ukrainian historian Oleksandr Zinchenko, who was coordinating the fundraiser, received a call from a trusted intermediary with an unexpected offer: a “Secret Santa” wanted to ensure the soldiers would have their drones. “Maybe we can buy a third backup drone?” the intermediary suggested after learning the fundraiser was nearly complete. The third drone was eventually nicknamed “Santa” to maintain the donor’s anonymity. Only after Pope Francis’s death did Zinchenko [reveal](#) the shocking truth: the “Secret Santa” was none other than Pope Francis himself. The donation came from the pontiff’s personal funds—not Vatican coffers—and was made with a strict requirement of confidentiality.
- “This clandestine support for Ukraine’s defense forces stands in stark contrast to the same Pope who, just months later in March 2024, would controversially [suggest](#) Ukraine should have “the courage to raise the white flag” and negotiate with Russia—a statement that provoked outrage across Ukraine and beyond. These two acts—secretly funding military equipment while publicly calling for negotiations that many Ukrainians viewed as surrender—encapsulate the profound contradictions that defined Pope Francis’s approach to Russia’s war against Ukraine.”
- Pope Francis leaves behind a legacy as divided as his own approach to Ukraine – a pontiff who secretly funded military drones while publicly suggesting Ukraine negotiate with Russia; a reformer who pushed for greater synodality within the

Church while failing to break from outdated diplomatic traditions.

In comparison to one of his predecessors, Pope John Paul II, under his papacy Francis failed in getting the Church he led to “Name Evil.”

Perhaps in death it might be different. Prior to the funeral of Pope Francis, Presidents Trump and Zelenskyy had a 15-minute meeting inside St. Peter’s Basilica. On the way back to Washington Pres. Trump sent out a [tweet](#) that ended with the following statement, “there was no reason for Putin to be shooting missiles into civilian areas, cities and towns, over the last few days. It makes me think that maybe he doesn’t want to stop the war, he’s just tapping me along, and has to be dealt with differently, through “Banking” or “Secondary Sanctions?” Too many people are dying!!!”

Imposing banking and secondary sanctions aren’t enough. If Trump wants to end the war, he should try something that has so far not been tried – give Ukraine all the weapons it’s asking for. See how that works, because nothing else has.

#### Remark About Ukraine by Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent at the Recent IMF/World Bank Spring Meeting

When speaking about the World Bank, Bessent said that no country that has provided military assistance to Russia should be allowed to benefit financially from Ukraine reconstruction. This would certainly include China, as well as some others such as India and possibly South Africa.

#### Partisan Warfare

Yesterday, at the same time Putin was meeting Donald Trump’s emissary Steve Witkoff, a Russian general was whacked by car bomb while he was walking near his residence.

Partisan warfare, whether in temporarily occupied Ukraine inside Russian territory, is becoming increasingly important to one's understanding of the war. The Daily Telegraph's "[Ukraine – the Latest](#)" now has a bi-weekly segment describing the recent partisan acts. It is compiled by [Dr. Jade McGlynn](#). It starts at 21:15 into the video and last for approximately 6 ½ minutes. According to the report, there were 12 actions during this period, mostly focused on military logistics. The report stated that most most of the actions were carried out by agents from an organization called "[Atesh](#)."

A podcast from the Times of London, "[The World in 10](#)" covers Ukrainian sleeper agents working inside Russia. This is something that we've covered in numerous emails. We have reported that Ukraine has been sending agents into Russia since the end of Euromaidan, in 2014, mostly to engage in non-violent disruptions, such as helping Russians to resist the draft or resisting attacks local languages such as Karelian, spoken by Karelian people living along Russia's border with Finland. Now, these agents are likely moving into sabotage and other, more violent activities.

The activities of partisans operating in temporarily occupied Ukraine, and agents operating inside Russian territory is an increasing problem for Russia. It will end because of any ceasefire.

### News From the Battlefield

Two from "Reporting From Ukraine."

[The first](#) covers a huge Ukrainian strike on an ammunition dump located in Vladimir northeast of Moscow, or over 1,000 km from Ukraine. According to Ukraine's Chief of the General Staff, Oleksandr Syrskyi, recent Ukrainian strikes on Russian ammunition dumps has caused a 50% reduction in the Russian rate of fire. The recent strike in Vladimir should reduce it even further. The strike on an ammunition storage facility near Toropets, also mentioned in this report, caused an earthquake measuring 3.2 on the Richter Scale. The Vladimir strike was far larger.

The second is a report on a British made laser weapon that is designed to destroy drone swarms of the type that has been directed at Ukrainian civilians. If perfected, especially if effectiveness can be extended to longer ranges, it has the potential to neutralize most Russian drone launched against Ukraine.