

Russian Crimea: One Year Later. Russian versus US-NATO “Interventions”

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NATO calls Crimea “invaded” and “occupied.” NATO has taught the world well what invasion and occupation really looks like, and Crimea isn’t it. In 2001, NATO invaded and began the occupation of the South-Central Asian country of Afghanistan. The invasion and occupation has left tens of thousands dead, many more displaced, and has resulted in continued chaos and violence up until and including present day. Throughout the conflict, revelations of abuses, mass murder, and other atrocities including systematic torture have been exposed, perpetrated by invading NATO forces and their Afghan collaborators.

The war has also resulted in the use of armed drone aircraft which regularly kill men, women, and children indiscriminately along the Afghan-Pakistani border – a campaign of mass murder ongoing for nearly as long as the conflict has raged.

In 2003, NATO-members joined the United States in the invasion and subsequent occupation of Iraq. An estimated 1 million people would lose their lives, including thousands of Western troops. For nearly a decade the United State occupied Iraq, and during its attempts to prop up a suitable client regime, laid waste to the nation. American forces in their bid to exercise control over the Iraqi population would conduct sweeping assaults on entire cities. The city of Fallujah would be leveled nearly to the ground, twice.

The US also maintained prison camps across the entire nation. Some vast and spanning, others dark and secret, including the infamous Abu Ghraib prison and the atrocities carried out there. In addition to Western armed forces, a significant number of paid mercenaries participated in both the occupation and the atrocities carried out during it, including the mass killing of civilians resulting in criminal cases still reverberating through Western legal systems and undermining Western credibility worldwide.

This is what real invasions and occupations look like. The armed entrance into a nation, the absolute subjugation of all its people through maximum force – or as the US calls it “shock and awe” – and an occupation by gunpoint with tanks and troops in the streets of a people who do not want them there, and who are willing to fight and die to drive them out.

So when in March of 2014, Crimea was returned to Russia and NATO called the move an “invasion” and “occupation,” the world was reasonably concerned. Some were concerned because they equated the words “invasion” and “occupation” with the levels of mass murder and decimation associated with NATO’s decades of foreign interventions – believing that such violence was now unfolding in Crimea, this time at the hands of the Russians. Others were concerned because of the obvious falsehood within which NATO was framing events in Crimea.

The Difference Between NATO and Russian Interventions

✘ NATO's intervention in Iraq and Afghanistan ran into heavy resistance while Russia's intervention in Crimea did not, because of several crucial differences. First, NATO was invading nations literally oceans away. The targets of their military aggression shared no common history with the West, no cultural, religious, or linguistic similarities, and surely no mutual contemporary shared interests. No significant party within either Iraq or Afghanistan asked the West to intervene beyond token proxies arranged by the West itself. Crimea on the other hand, had once existed as part of Russia. Many in Crimea identify themselves either as Russians, or of Russian descent. They speak Russian and observe Russian customs. Many in Crimea recognize that the soil beneath their feet has been soaked in Russian blood to defend it from aggression throughout history, including against the Nazis in World War 2.

When the government of Ukraine was violently overthrown by an overtly US-backed coup in Kiev, and many of the familiar symbols and movements that had in the past taken power with the help of Adolf Hitler in the 1940's began stirring in western Ukraine again, turning to Russia for protection was only natural. Not only did the people of Crimea ask Russia to intervene, a referendum was held that overwhelmingly quantified their request.

Aside from storming several military bases and some tense moments in stand-off's with Ukrainian troops, there was no violence when Russian forces began moving into Crimea.

A Year On, All is Well...

Life in Russian Crimea today is exceedingly normal. While a war rages on next door in Ukraine, the people of Crimea enjoy peace, stability, and a sense of unity and hope for the future. Even with economic setbacks delivered by NATO's attempts to take the horrors they've created within Ukraine, and recreate them on the other side of the border in Russia, people are still able to conduct business more or less as they did before the conflict began. Some say the economy has actually improved despite the sanctions.

Of course, the transition, with an armed conflict unfolding just across the border, is not seamless. Euronews would report mixed feelings in Crimea, stating in its article, "[Crimea economy one year on after Russian annexation](#)," that:

For many locals the biggest worry is the spiralling cost of food. Kyiv's refusal to recognise the border means it can't legally export to Crimea directly.

Most supplies come from Russia by ferry but bad weather can delay shipments for days. Many products are just not available. Regional government data showed inflation jumped 38 percent and the cost of food increased by almost a half from March through to December. Not a single Russian supermarket chain has opened in Crimea.

But a poll at the end of January by a Ukraine market research agency recorded that more than half of the 800 people questioned believe they are better off financially since joining Russia.

Despite this, after only a year, and considering the circumstances, Crimea is faring well,

especially compared to neighboring Ukraine. Logistical networks will surely be restructured and markets will surely adjust. With the West desperately seeking to portray Crimea's state one year after returning to Russia as dire as possible, that the best they can do is cite the disappearance of "McDonald's" and "Apple" stores as "proof" that Crimea is "suffering," bodes well for the Crimean people.

While NATO calls this an "invasion" and "occupation," it is ironically NATO itself that has taught the world so well what a real invasion and occupation looks like, making their recent claims against Russia in Crimea ring particularly hollow. Also ironic is the fact that the NATO-backed regime in Kiev, Ukraine, is imposing upon its own people the conditions and horrors generally associated with a real invasion and occupation. That some call the conflict in Ukraine one of several "proxy wars" NATO is waging around the world, this should come as no surprise.

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