

“Russia, Ukraine and U.S. National Security”

By

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Mr. Rojansky stated that the Russian invasion of Ukraine and the current fighting there are part of the on-going collapse of the Soviet Union.

- Russia seized the once-Soviet Crimean peninsula and moved soldiers into eastern Ukraine in 2014 after corrupt and pro-Russian leader Yanukovich fled the country, and Moscow invaded Ukraine with forces from all sides in February 2022.

Mr. Rojansky clearly judged that Russia’s invasion of Ukraine could be a template for Moscow’s further aggression in Eurasia.

- Significant numbers of Russian speakers reside in Moldova, Belarus, Kazakhstan and elsewhere.
- Two world wars have started in Europe. A third would be a human, economic, and environmental disaster.
 - In Ukraine alone, destruction of nuclear power plants such as Zaporizhzhia would have consequences that would dwarf those of Chernobyl in 1986.

Additionally, Rojansky raised the prospect that other countries with a *narrative of historical unity*, such as Xi’s China and Kim’s North Korea, would take a period of presumed U.S. distraction in Europe to kick off hostilities in their own regions.

Despite the uneasy stalemate at present in the fighting in Ukraine, what if by some measure Ukraine was to win and Russia was to lose? One-fifth of Ukraine’s prewar population has fled the country. If Ukraine wins the war and these folks return, many of them with *hard-core* political attitudes, establishing the country as a *successful civic democracy* may be difficult. On the other hand, if Russia was losing, Putin would likely use nuclear weapons to attempt to forestall defeat. And even sweeping Putin from power would hardly transform Moscow’s policies. Coup plotter Prigozhin and Chechen strongman Kadyrov might be indicative of Russia’s post-Putin leadership.

Because the stakes are so high, the U.S. must *show strength* in opposing Russia’s war in Ukraine. Financial support to Kyiv may ultimately reach one trillion dollars, which Rojansky judges to probably be a good investment.

Given the magnitude of the stakes, Washington must stand with Ukraine, but know its limits. Costs should be discussed. America needs *informed, active, open-minded and welcoming* citizens in order to model a successful civic democracy to Ukraine and others.

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