Crimea vote – The Ukrainian situation continues

Today the people of the Crimean Republic (I had to wiki its political configuration) will vote on whether or not they will join the Russian Confederation or return to its pre-1992 status as a quasi autonomous entity within Ukraine (whatever that means). My assumption is that the vote will be for option 1. There will be a pro-Russian political apparatus established, a recognition from Moscow, and a withdrawal of the not-Russian forces back to Russia. And then the rest of the Ukraine comes into play.

An autonomous state, as the new Crimean Republic would be, is able to control its own foreign orientation, as long as it is the direction of Russia. With the visit of the President of Tatarstan to the Crimea, Moscow's agenda is clear: the only non-option is a Western oriented Crimea and old animosities with ethnic Tatars can be accommodated as with the other ethnicities within the Soviet, er, Russian sphere of influence. Access to the Black Sea will not be inhibited. And if other areas within the Ukraine desire the change, perhaps a referendum could be held there as well. The only potential hiccup for Moscow is Ankara, who seem to be taking a position of non recognition toward the results of this vote regardless of the outcome. Turkey has its own successionist issues.

But this leaves the EU oriented leadership in Kyiv, with a fait accompli.

While Kyiv and Berlin and Washington and Paris and London will not recognize the validity of these election results, the problem is that they don't have the boots on the ground to affect any change. Negotiations will now begin for the rest of the Ukraine. The region is an important artery for energy and foodstuffs, important for Europe and an important source of wealth for Russia. The key consideration for Angela Merkel is whether or not Ukraine as a political entity is worth the potential disruption to the German economy. The leadership in Kyiv and the people demonstrating for greater political openness and economic liberalism are, to an extent, secondary in this geo-political game. The United States will refuse this concession as well but it seems doomed to rattle its sword once or twice as the media attention turns, becoming obsessed with a missing

Malaysian airplane. And both Paris and London, again, don't seem to be willing to risk *too* much. The new leadership in Kyiv and the people in the streets with their legitimate demands for fair and transparent political and economic systems may find that their allies in the West are willing to lend token sums and platitudes, but not much more.

#Shocker 95% voted to join Russia.

And the situation as seen through game theory here. Arguing that a tipping point has been reached whereby unilateral actions, such as Russian actions in the Crimea, become the norm. While possibly a statistical abberation, if this is true then expect more aggressive military postures by states seeking to solidify their regions of influence. Interesting hypothesis.

Source: https://www.idonthaveacoolname.com/crimea-vote-the-ukrainian-situation-continues/