

Federal government were warned about setting 'significant precedent' with Ukraine visa program

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... "*were* warned?" Not
"was" warned? Isn't "federal
government" singular?

Court documents show federal immigration officials warned that the government risked undermining the temporary immigration system with the design of the emergency visa program for war-displaced Ukrainians.

Immigration Department staff raised the concern in a memo to Sean Fraser, immigration minister at the time, shortly after the program was announced.

The documents were disclosed as part of a lawsuit against the federal government by two Afghan Canadians, who allege Canada discriminated against Afghan refugees by treating them differently than it did Ukrainians fleeing the [Russian invasion](#).

The memos outline the design of the Ukraine visa program, which allowed an unlimited number of Ukrainians and their family members to come to Canada to wait out the war.

The policy also waived the requirement for fleeing Ukrainians to promise to leave when their visa expires, against the advice of department staff.

Fraser ultimately agreed with the department's recommendation not to publish the policy publicly, given the "unprecedented and exceptional nature" of the approach.

<https://www.theglobeandmail.com/politics/article-federal-government-were-warned-about-setting-significant-precedent/>

We know why our efforts to back Ukraine in the war with Russia have been so far beyond that shown for other beleaguered nations: Chrystia Freeland, whose Ukrainian mother helped draft the Ukrainian constitution and Ukrainian father—though she plays up his being a Peace River farmer—is I believe a lawyer but maybe more than just an investor in that canola farm, someone with grease under his fingernails, dirt in his ears, and grain dust in his lungs...

Our treatment of refugee Afghans, and other afflicted “Brown” non-Christian people in conflict zones (e.g. Sudan) gives them every right to deplore our double standard and hypocrisy. An unspoken subtext of mainstream Canada’s welcoming of Ukrainians has been that they are “White” and “Christian”, easily assimilated into that White, nominally Christian mainstream.

This criticism is not to say that Ukrainians do not deserve extraordinary measures. For one thing, the prejudice Ukrainians long experienced in the previous century must be included in the judgment of their current treatment. But so did/do those abandoned or left-in-limbo Afghans deserve better from us.

Politics, politicians using their power to advance personal ethnic agendas. Successive federal governments, seeking favour in electorally-key swing seats in Ontario and the Lower Mainland, have allowed Punjabi Sikhs to abuse the immigration system to bring in inordinate numbers of their peers, obtaining out-of-proportion political influence here. Harjit Sajjan should have been kicked out of cabinet for having prioritized (nonCanadian) Sikh’s over Afghans to whom Canada was particularly obligated during the rescue from Kabul.

But with the Liberals compromised also by Chrystia’s promotion of Ukrainian interests, Justin will do nothing to threaten Sikh’s voting Liberal again. (I also suspect he is refusing to resign in significant part out of loyalty to Volodymyr Zelensky, with Justin feeling his support is critical to Ukraine.) Rumours of his readiness to jettison Chrystia from her Finance Minister and Deputy Prime Minister roles show how shallow Justin’s loyalties are, and shameless his priorities. Like Biden with his selection and treatment of Kamala Harris, Mr. Trudeau—if he has ever given any real prominence to anyone but himself in Government—has promoted people who could not prove a real threat to him. Mélanie Joly? Give me a break. She must make Xi Jinping smirk sardonically.

Ukraine illustrates some sobering realities. Known for its corruption long before the war, it has been hard to see the country as “better” than Russia. Even as Canada pours resources into supporting Ukraine’s rightful defense, scammers operate in Kyiv bilking Canadians. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/ukraine-call-centre-canada-crypto-scam-1.7127166#:~:text=Every%20evening%2C%20about%20150%20people,to%20work%20in%20the%20industry>.

I am trying to help a couple of Ukrainians learn English here. This is hampered by their continual use of Google Translate. But they don’t use it in Ukrainian: Before the invasion, if you were “sophisticated” in Kyiv, you spoke Russian; if you spoke Ukrainian, you were a “hick.” Google Translate, they say, also works better in Russian than Ukrainian. Maybe Putin’s hackers make sure of this.

Whatever Ukraine’s faults and lesser qualities, these may rightly be decidedly attributed to centuries of Russian influence. Like ethnic Russian Mr. Zelensky, Ukraine has realized how much Ukraine needs to become properly “Ukrainian.” He was once a comedian; I wonder how much laughter follows him now. TJB