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LDPR Advises Poland, Romania and Hungary to Divide Ukraine

By Jennifer Monaghan

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The city of Lviv in western Ukraine. **Darriuss Royce**

Russia's Liberal Democratic party has advised the heads of Poland, Romania and Hungary to hold referendums on taking control of former territories in modern-day Ukraine.

The LDPR party confirmed that it had sent letters to the embassies of the three countries to suggest "they hold referendums in territories that neighbor Ukraine and in several regions that used to belong to the aforementioned countries," and think about taking over the territories, Interfax reported Monday.

Last week, the LDPR said in a statement posted on its website that the chaotic formation of the Ukrainian state had resulted in a the emergence of a people "that are absolutely incompatible psychologically," and who have been feuding with each other for centuries.

Ukraine's Chernivitsi region — forced to become a part of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist

Republic in 1940 — used to belong to Romania, the statement said. It added that the Transcarpathia region was "ethnically and historically related to Hungary," and that geopolitical considerations resulted in the loss of five Polish territories during the Soviet period: Volyn, Lviv, Ternopil, Ivano-Frankivsk and Rivne.

The LDPR statement particularly noted that western parts of Ukraine were originally Polish, offering as evidence the fact that attention-loving party leader Vladimir Zhirinovsky's father, a Pole, had owned a factory in the Rivne region.

Zhirinovsky, who generally makes headlines for ridiculous statements rather than serious threats, told the State Duma last week that it was not just time " to bring Russian land back under Russian flag" but also for western Ukrainian land to be returned to Poland, Hungary and Romania.

The suggestions will irk the new authorities in Ukraine, who have lost control of the Black Sea peninsula Crimea after the region voted overwhelmingly in favor of joining Russia in a referendum held last Sunday.

Further unrest has been noted in the east of the country, with pro-Russian movements in Donetsk and Kharkiv calling for referendums on their own status within Ukraine.

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