Breaking Up the Bad. Part I

What do we, people of the Western world, do when the war in Ukraine is over?

It’s not an easy matter to tackle. We were contemplating to write about this subject for some time. The war is still very much going on in Ukraine. People die and homes are destroyed. Mayhem, murder, massacres. It’s a horror movie. One day it will be over and, barring other conflicts flaring up, we can bring ourselves to start living with post-war realities. Many changes are coming: new political and economic alliances; trade agreements; recognition of who are “friends or foes”, shifts of world economies to alternate energy sources and suppliers and many more.

We don’t go back to the way life was before. We must accept that it would be different in many ways. Any war is akin the loss of innocence. It’s still you, but a more mature, sans illusions; perhaps a wiser person and the rose-colored glasses are gone.

One major issue on the world’s agenda would inevitably be “what do we do with the Russian Federation”. It committed major war crimes, threatens other countries and presents serious danger to the civilized world. It cannot be left alone to its own devices.

The considerations below aren’t new. Many people around the world express similar ideas one way or the other. It is a sad reality our descendants or we would have to deal with. We may as well start looking into it now.

When the Russian Federation meets defeat, regretfully, it would not be the end of the story. It may leave Ukraine alone for some time and butt out due to losses in military equipment, personnel and internal political strife, which unavoidably accompany failure. But the empire would not stop. Too many people over there want to destroy Ukraine and its people, have a grudge against the Europeans, NATO and the USA. Any Russia’s voices demanding true peace and political reforms are suppressed, expelled or jailed. We have a wounded wild animal that crawls back into its den, to lick wounds and to plan a comeback; a revenge. It’s a time bomb, ready to go off. They would be willing to live in utter misery, literally under 10,000 sanctions, behind the iron curtain – only to avenge themselves somehow. Gone forever are its European oil and gas revenues, most international trade, acceptance among other civilized nations, any sort of political reputation, but they simply don’t care. They still have

their TV propaganda fanning the flames of hatred, touting how they are still the greatest nation on Earth. Sadly, in that condition Russian Federation would be a threat to the entire civilization. The world may not care for Russia any longer, but the opposite isn't true. That country is a menace that had to be dealt with somehow.

There are three apparent ways that Russian Federation can be transformed from being a military threat to anyone but itself. They are "reprogramming", containment and breaking the country into multitude of new independent nations.

This is a very complex task.

When the WW II was over and the Allied Powers took over German Reich, one of the first things they did was to start "reprogramming" the local population, replacing Nazi propaganda views and prosecuting hard-core Nazi criminals. Denazification and rehabilitation processes were long, arduous and faced many obstacles, read about it here and here. We don't believe Russia could be taken over militarily by outside powers through any kind of conventional warfare. Unless the country starts a war with NATO, no one expects to see action with "boots on the ground" in the Russian Federation leading to its occupation. It's too complex, enormously costly and politically perilous. One must gain physical control of the land and population, the courts, mass media and somehow direct that country's political agenda. It was the most difficult task for post-war Germany; now imagine what it would be like for Russia; the country of about 140 million people that occupies 1/6 of all landmass on this planet. How do you spell "not feasible"?

Even somehow removing the current Russian leadership from power isn't going to have much effect. The country lives under a one-party system; anyone today with any kind of political clout is affiliated with it. All opposition was driven out or jailed. You have no apparent future leaders with alternate plans and no population that would support any kind of new political agenda. Electing a new slate would be a sham, any new leader – a "Manchurian candidate" without real power. There has never been a truly democratic election in that country, ever. The powerful old-timers affiliated with the current government and security services would take over in a minute.

We don't have much hope in Russia's own political process due to corruption, propensity to violence and backward thinking. The majority of the population is mostly brainwashed, minding their own business and will not participate in reforms – they fully expect them to come from the top. Unless the new government makes it a priority to wean its own population off vile propaganda, the "great Russia" poison will continue to do damage. It took over 20 years for them to

arrive where they are today. It would likely take just as long to go in the opposite direction, even with the most concentrated effort. How much do you want to bet any such effort wouldn’t last?

In the days of the “cold war” the West directed short-wave broadcasts towards the Soviet population, giving them access to news as they were. Those broadcasts were jammed. Today they block websites that carry anything they view as a threat to their power. As of this writing the number exceeds 130,000 websites and IP addresses. Bringing truth to the majority of the Russian population would be hard at best. Unless given full access to the country’s MSM we doubt “collective West” could do much about “re-programming” of the population and expunging of the poisonous Nazi ideas that permeate the Russian Federation these days. Still we should try directing information towards Russia’s subjects by various means in the protracted propaganda battle for their minds.

Another, a more likely scenario, is containment. Keep Russia and its paws off the civilized world. Cut our economic and political ties with that land; sanction them; deprive them of modern technology and revenue sources; kick them out of every ‘club of nations’ and the United Nations; sharply curtail its trade, shut off the lines for the propaganda machine. Don’t buy, don’t sell and don’t listen. Let them keep their culture and the language where it belongs – inside the country. No foreign travel for the citizens of the Russian Federation. It would be the “iron curtain” of sorts, erected on the outside.

Lots of it is wishful thinking, of course.

To be continued