War and Peace. Misunderstood

“A bad peace is better than a good war,” a bit of old wisdom.

The war between Ukraine and Russia is a year old. It started when Russia invaded its neighbor back on Feb 24, 2022. Since that time, it has committed nothing but the most despicable destruction of cities and villages, murdered thousands of people, arrested, tortured and executed anyone it deemed a threat; sent millions into exile – they left the country just to stay alive. Russia brought destruction and ruthless plundering and annexed large chunks of its Ukraine territory. Russia kidnapped thousands of Ukrainian children to be adopted by Russian families, so eliminate any claim to being Ukrainians. Uncounted thousands were forced-moved from their homeland into Russia, for involuntary resettlement there, without much in the way of state support. Ukraine citizens were moved to the Russian Far East, where desperate people find themselves thousands of kilometers away from their motherland. Russia and its army are guilty of every imaginable war crime and then some. They leave complete and utter destruction in their wake, with dead cities and farmlands, decimated and demolished in trash-like conditions. Its armed forces leave behind mines and booby traps of every imaginable kind, so civilians would be killed long after the battles move elsewhere. Russia aims at and attacks multi-story city building, to inflict maximum damage on civilians with drones and rockets they launch from far away. They do the same against infrastructure elements (power stations, water supply and heat-supplying municipal installations), to create greater suffering for the Ukrainian population in the winter. In the captured areas they force people to accept Russian citizenship, and once this is complete, they draft them into the army, advanced age notwithstanding.

We can go on and on, but you get the picture. Russia is a criminal fascist state, trying to restore its USSR borders that once included Ukraine, while committing genocide.

We periodically bump into people who talk “peace” to us. How the world should be doing everything it can to stop the war and have Ukraine sign a peace agreement with Russia. There are not many of them, but they are out there. Well, even a “bad peace” would be great. Peace is always a result of a meeting of the minds over circumstances that are married to political reality, winner-loser balance of power and desire to stop the bloodshed by the actual conflicting participants and various third-parties.

Peace is when the “losing” side recognizes the inevitability of its defeat, and accepts the terms of surrender to minimize the loss of life, territory and repair a wounded and uprooted economy. Peace is the time when the “winner” gets to keep most of what they captured, promising they will do no further harm to the loser. Papers are signed, hands are shaken, troops go home; life can begin its return to normalcy.

Multiple politicians and even ex-military men spoke about peace in Ukraine. Yea, let’s give up some of that territory to Russia in exchange for the end of hostilities, on Russia’s terms of course. These terms would grant Russia territories, but also a reprieve, to rebuild its armed forces, to go on with “business as usual” in Europe and elsewhere, to have other countries reopen its borders and markets to oil and gas from the “winning side.” In time Russia would break the signed agreements (like it did with most peace agreements it signed in the past) and will advance further, capturing more territories. It would not stop there. There are other former lands it wants – Republic of Georgia, Moldova, Kazakhstan, the Baltic countries and Belarus. If it could, it would invade Eastern European countries that were formerly in its USSR orbit, to bring them back into the fold. This is what peace means, per Russian political thinking.

They can always brandish a nuclear club over the world’s head, for better “understanding and compliance.” Got that?

Peace is great when it is something amicably agreed upon. But we are so far beyond anything the two sides can see eye to eye, there can be no peace until Russia (and NOT Ukraine) is defeated. The beast doesn’t listen to any arguments; it is bent on destruction and annihilation. Give it peace and it will use it against you. Peace makes it strong; it makes you weak and despised. Giving Russia a piece of Ukraine in exchange for a peace agreement is an awful and stupid idea. Would you give an intruder a room in your home, so he can leave you alone and stop the beating of your wife and kids? Would you really do that?

Only Ukraine can decide when to make peace. They will never agree to peace on Russia’s terms. The citizens of Ukraine are one angry beehive: united, determined, powerful and motivated to kick the aggressor out of its land; to inflict maximum losses on its invading force. It cannot happen any other way. With few sour exceptions, the world has accepted the notion that it needs to do what it takes for Ukraine to win this war.

Russia became a toxic, pariah state, a threat to NATO and the European Union; and to several other states besides Ukraine, for that matter. Anyone pushing for peace at this time is doing Russia’s bidding. These wonderful people today

include assorted European politicians with ties to the Russian Federation; ex-PM of Italy and media tycoon, Mr. Silvio Berlusconi; a duplicitous Mr. Erdogan, President of Turkey, one Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, the leader of Brazil who recently took his peace plan to Washington; and surprisingly – some members of the Republican Party in the United States.

The latter strikes us as utterly unfair, nearsighted and subversive. While 2/3 of a U.S. population support continued military and humanitarian aid to Ukraine, when these people do not. "Business Insider" article can be found here, for more information. Quote: "A group of House Republicans is calling for an immediate halt of US aid in Ukraine, arguing that such support for the country's defense in the face of Russia's invasion is "inadvertently contributing to civilian casualties." Their concern is most admirable yet misguided. Ending the war soonest is what will stop civilian casualties. Giving Putin what he wants leads only to more bloodshed and suffering. The question is why do they go the other way? They are surely NOT speaking for the American people. Whose voices do they really amplify? Another quote: "A recent Gallup poll found that nearly two-thirds of Americans believe the U.S. should continue to support Ukraine in its fight against Russia, even if that means prolonging the conflict. However, that support is weakest among Republicans, 41% of whom stated they support ending the conflict "quickly," even if that means territorial gains for Russia." Former President Trump, for whom we have the deepest respect, has previously stated that he would stop military aid to Ukraine if he is to become a sitting president again. What are we missing here? What is the big idea of giving Russia the upper hand?

We have several theories why this is taking place. One – Republicans simply oppose the way Democrats spend taxpayer money. Two – Republicans would otherwise support Ukraine, but they might feel there is corruption down the line with billions of dollars are being stolen by various parties involved (several audits found no wrong on how aid is being disbursed and delivered). Three – why should the United States supply the bulk of military support Ukraine gets – let the Europeans do their part (BTW, Europeans surely do their part). Four – the Republican Party is as corrupt as the Democrats and by denying support to the noble fight; they have Russian or Chinese interests in mind or pockets. Five – growing skepticism about Ukraine's ability to win the war (see Washington Post article). The New Yorker Magazine addressed the same matter. This last one comes from a prolonged reluctance by the Western power to provide heavy weapons needed to win the war and end the conflict. Republicans should blame Biden, but not Ukraine.

Except for "theory #5" we have no proof for any of the above. These are just

concerns to be aired, so take your pick.

There is unlikely to be any conspiracy here, but something else is. The Republican Party manifested itself as weak and spineless when Trump was in office. Their constituents now are NOT telling elected Republican representatives to squash the aid. So what is this?

Call us cynical if you wish, but here are the facts: for a mere 5% of the annual United States military budget (total aid given to Ukraine so far), we have destroyed almost 50% of the Russian Federation war capabilities, and not a single U.S. soldier was sent into battle. This isn't a shabby return on such investment, alas, paid by the lives of Ukrainian men and women.

Elon Musk, the "billionaire genius" deserves a special mention. He and his company Starlink early in the war provided the hardware plus internet field services to Ukraine, thus enabling battlefield command and control, communications, intelligence gathering, precision artillery and rocket strikes and many other elements that are so vital to the victory of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. They still do. Some of his wares were provided free and some were paid for, but it all made a huge difference. Not to mention earning the deep gratitude of the Ukrainian people. But lately, if the accounts are true, Mr. Musk is having second thoughts. He is suddenly concerned to "… not enable escalation of conflict that may lead to WW III". His company manifests this concern by shutting off drones' use of the internet service he provides. Drones are totally crucial to this war and victory, being eyes, ears and the punishing swords striking the Russian army. We must question why he suddenly became pious, pure and pacifist, smack in the middle of the battle. He knew full well what he was getting himself into when he initially offered his services to Ukraine. We wonder – did Russia get to him? If so – through whom, where and how? His sudden pacifism reeks of deception. There is someone within his circle of friends who has a Russian connection (one Mr. Kurganov), but without the facts we can only guess. Yet, it could be anyone in his orbit. This switch is not accidental, and if not reversed, can indeed lead us into WW III. Last minute addition: Twitter, under Musk's control, has begun asking unverified (i.e. unpaid) accounts that display Ukrainian flag icons, to remove them. Twitter claims sudden 'war neutrality' which is outrageous. We wonder where Twitter's owner got that idea.

Only rapid and complete victory over the Russian Federation will save this world from an even bigger war and perhaps a nuclear confrontation down the road. The beast must be done away with. Peace will follow.