

Weekly Commentary 8 – Feb 2023

War and Peace in Ukraine

The well-known Russian historical novel “War and Peace”, written by Leo Tolstoy about the Napoleonic war, became a casualty of the 21st century war in Ukraine, when after the Russian invasion, there was widespread banning of everything Russian from western discourse.

The war in the novel is the first invasion of Russia from the west by Napoleon’s France, which trumpeted the call for liberte, egalite, and fraternite just a couple of decades earlier with the storming of the Bastille. I don’t think Napoleon’s army cared too much about liberty, equality or fraternity, trampling all those noble values under their boots. In the following two hundred years since Napoleon, there were two more invasions of Russia by the west. The second was by Wilhelm Kaiser’s Army and the third was by Hitler’s Wehrmacht. All three caused enormous suffering in Russia. In the Napoleonic wars, the pursuit of a scorched earth policy to defeat the Grand Arme led to the burning of Moscow. It worked, and Napoleon was repelled. But that was extremely painful. A quarter of a million Russians were killed and the Russian capital was razed to the ground.

The next war in WW1 led to the downfall of the Tsarist empire and created a new political entity, with a governing philosophy that changed the world. Russia lost about 1.5million men but in the years following the Oct Revolution, the country was invaded by a number of western countries that included the United States. That is a fact of history that can never be erased from the institutional memory of Russia.

The third war was the worst for Russia. The Wehrmacht, supported by Italy and other countries which are now members of NATO, as well as many western soldiers incorporated into Waffen SS divisions, invaded the Soviet Union in June 1941. It took 4 years of herculean effort and 28 million deaths of Soviet soldiers and civilians to bring it to an end. That has been called the Great Patriotic War. Memories of it loom large in the consciousness of all Russians and those who take an interest in the Second World War, like this blogger.

Three times in the last 200 years, and then again for the last thirty years, the western alliance that is NATO, consisting pretty much all the countries that have sent armed soldiers into Russian territory in all those wars, is from the Russian perspective still at it. That’s how the Russians see NATO expansion, as has been specifically referred to by Putin in his address to the nation last week. They see the attempt at bringing Ukraine into NATO as an existential threat, much like the three previous invasions of Russia led by France, then twice by Germany and now the United States. Given the facts of history, except for the morons who don’t read history which obviously include the political class in the west, there is no other way for the Russians to interpret the military intentions of NATO over the last thirty years

except as a threat to their existence that would be a repeat of three highly traumatic wars in the last two centuries.

And the west today wonders why the Russians have invaded Ukraine to stop another western invasion from happening. What is truly incomprehensible is how Ukraine who has long been on the Russian side during the last 200 years of wars, did not understand Moscow's apprehension of western intentions - unless you factor in how corrupt Ukrainian politicians are and can be bought to bring their country into any war as long as they personally get to buy mansions in Miami and lambos in Monaco.

The fairy tale of the Kyiv regime wanting democracy and individual freedom cannot stand up to scrutiny if one only assesses how they ran their own country before the war and how they still run it since the war started. The widespread corruption has all been recently exposed when 15 ministers out of 23 have been sacked, the worst being the corruption in the defence ministry when they stole money by jacking up the prices of food for the army fighting for the country's survival. It's incorrigible. Why should anyone believe what the Kyiv government says?

Here are some excerpts in the official read-out of Putin speech from six days ago, stating Russia's view of the world:

One year ago, to protect the people in our historical lands, to ensure the security of our country and to eliminate the threat coming from the neo-Nazi regime that had taken hold in Ukraine after the 2014 coup, it was decided to begin the special military operation. Step by step, carefully and consistently we will deal with the tasks we have at hand.

Since 2014, Donbass has been fighting for the right to live in their land and to speak their native tongue. It fought and never gave up amid the blockade, constant shelling and the Kiev regime's overt hatred. It hoped and waited that Russia would come to help.

In the meantime, as you know well, we were doing everything in our power to solve this problem by peaceful means, and patiently conducted talks on a peaceful solution to this devastating conflict.

Behind our backs, a very different plan was being hatched. As we can see now, the promises of Western leaders, their assurances that they were striving for peace in Donbass turned out to be a sham and outright lies. They were simply marking time, engaged in political chicanery, turning a blind eye to the Kiev regime's political assassinations and reprisals against undesirable people, their mistreatment of believers. They increasingly incited the Ukrainian neo-Nazis to stage terrorist attacks in Donbass. The officers of nationalist battalions trained at Western academies and schools. Weapons were also supplied. I would like to emphasise that, prior to the special military operation, Kiev held negotiations with the West about the delivery of air-defence systems, warplanes and other heavy equipment to Ukraine. We also

recall the Kiev regime's vain attempts to obtain nuclear weapons; they discussed this issue publicly.

The United States and NATO quickly deployed their army bases and secret biological laboratories near Russian borders. They mastered the future theatre of war during war games, and they prepared the Kiev regime which they controlled and Ukraine which they had enslaved for a large-scale war.

Now they admit this publicly and openly, and they feel no shame about it. They seem to be proud and even to be revelling in their own perfidy, while calling the Minsk Agreements and the Normandy Format a diplomatic show and a bluff. It turns out that all this time, while Donbass was ablaze, while blood was being spilled, and while Russia sincerely made every effort to achieve a peaceful solution (I want to emphasise the word "sincerely"), they gambled on people's lives, and in effect, were playing with marked cards, as they say in certain circles.

This appalling method of deception has been tried and tested many times before. They behaved just as shamelessly and duplicitously when destroying Yugoslavia, Iraq, Libya, and Syria. They will never be able to wash off this shame. The concepts of honour, trust, and decency are not for them.

Over the long centuries of colonialism, diktat and hegemony, they got used to being allowed everything, got used to spitting on the whole world. It turned out that they treat people living in their own countries with the same disdain, like a master. After all, they cynically deceived them too, tricked them with tall stories about the search for peace, about adherence to the UN Security Council resolutions on Donbass. Indeed, the Western elites have become a symbol of total, unprincipled lies.

We firmly defend our interests as well as our belief that in today's world there should be no division into so-called civilised countries and all the rest and that there is a need for an honest partnership that rejects any exclusivity, especially an aggressive one.

We were open and sincerely ready for a constructive dialogue with the West; we said and insisted that both Europe and the whole world needed an indivisible security system equal for all countries, and for many years we suggested that our partners discuss this idea together and work on its implementation. But in response, we received either an indistinct or hypocritical reaction, as far as words were concerned. But there were also actions: NATO's expansion to our borders, the creation of new deployment areas for missile defence in Europe and Asia – they decided to take cover from us under an 'umbrella' – deployment of military contingents, and not just near Russia's borders.

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That is of course the Russia view. The collective west do not see it in those terms and are defining the Ukraine war as an imperialist invasion. Of course, they are entitled to take that view, but if one takes into account the objective perspective of history, there is no question that Russia can take its own view which is diametrically opposite. Bystanders can view it whichever way they want, based on their interpretation of the historical evidence. But it seems clear to me that the version of the war as interpreted by the collective west has not been accepted by 85% of the people on planet Earth, and more importantly, that the Russian view is increasingly being accepted.

This leads me to think that there is peace on the wings. The collective west cannot go on pushing the view that this is a Russian war of aggression. It may be a Russian invasion, which is wrong of course, but if it were interpreted as a pre-emptive strike to prevent what would be the west stepping all over a bright red Russian line, then there would be tolerant views in the Global South on the matter. After all, who complained about Israel's pre-emptive strike in Jun 1967? Even in Germany these days, alternative views on the conflict are emerging as has been reported by The Guardian, extremely anti-Russia, today:

Thousands protest in Berlin against giving weapons to Ukraine

About 13,000 people gather at Brandenburg Gate, as demonstrations also take place in other German cities

Kate Connolly in Berlin

Sat 25 Feb 2023 19.18 GMT

Thousands of people have taken part in a demonstration in central Berlin to protest against giving more weapons to Ukraine, urging the German government to deescalate the crisis by paving the way for negotiations with Vladimir Putin instead.

Police estimated there were 13,000 people at the Uprising for Peace, at the Brandenburg Gate, organised by Sahra Wagenknecht, a renegade member of the Left party, and veteran feminist campaigner Alice Schwarzer.

The organisers claimed as many as 50,000 took part. Similar demonstrations took place in other German cities.

In a speech at the protest, Wagenknecht spoke of “the start of a citizens’ initiative” and a “starting signal for a new, strong peace movement in Germany”. She said the demonstrators had been united by the fact they did not feel represented by the government of Olaf Scholz and his foreign minister Annalena Baerbock over their decision to provide Ukraine with weapons.

Protesters across Europe demonstrate against war in Ukraine – video report

Protesters carried banners reading: ‘Helmets today, tanks tomorrow, the day after tomorrow your sons,’ in reference to the manner in which the coalition government has increased its military support for Kyiv, initially donating 5,000 helmets and more recently agreeing to send German-made Leopard II tanks.

Other banners read: “Diplomaten statt Grenaten (Diplomats instead of grenades)”, “Stop the Killing” and “Not My War, Not My Government”.

“We are like the slaves to war and the warmongers,” said Norbert, a former soldier, declining to give his surname, who held a banner reading “The real enemy sits in the City of London and New York,” a reference he said to the financial powers who he claimed were behind the war and had no interest in it ending. Germany, he said, had no right to participate in another war, after the second world war.

The Uprising for Peace was organised by left-wing politician Sahra Wagenknecht (centre) and women’s rights activist Alice Schwarzer (right). Photograph: Anadolu Agency/Getty Images
One man held a banner on which he said people had been numbed into accepting the war by the sedative effects of the coronavirus vaccine. Around the demonstration, loudspeakers blasted peace songs such as John Lennon’s Imagine and Nena’s 99 Red Balloons.

A woman called Edith, carrying a large portrait of the Indian revolutionary Mahatma Gandhi, said: “We should follow his example of nonviolent resistance to bring an end to this madness.”

Elsewhere, other nearby demonstrations showed sympathy for Ukraine, with banners reading: “Stop Putin’s War” and “Help Ukraine Defend Itself”.



Thousands of people gather during a demonstration at Berlin’s historic Brandenburg Gate, calling for peace negotiations with Russia in the Ukraine war. Photograph: Anadolu Agency/Getty Images

A poster held by a group of anti-fascist demonstrators pointed out how Wagenknecht had put warnings of a Russian invasion of Ukraine down to media propaganda, stating in a TV broadcast on 20 February, 2022: “We can be happy that Putin is not like he is presented as being, namely a crazy Russian nationalist who is intoxicated with the idea of shifting borders. If that was the case, then negotiations would probably be pointless.”

A group of Ukrainians wrapped in their country’s flag outside the nearby Russian embassy held up posters and slogans including, “Not delivering weapons to Ukraine is the equivalent to genocide support”.

Roman Overko, from the Ukrainian city of Lviv who now lives in Berlin, said: “The idea of negotiating is naïve. How do you negotiate with such enemies of humanity? You can’t talk to them like normal people. Putin is a second Hitler.”



Many people taking part in the protest carried placards saying tanks should not be supplied to Ukraine. Photograph: Fabrizio Bensch/Reuters

Baerbock was singled out at the demonstration as the government member with the most responsibility for drawing Germany deeper into the conflict. Participants angrily shouted “Baerbock raus” – or Baerbock out – during and at the end of Wagenknecht’s address. Scholz and the pro-business FDP’s Marie-Agnes Strack-Zimmermann, head of the Bundestag defence committee, who has pressured the government to deliver more military support, were also criticised.

Wagenknecht said her main motivation was to bring to an end the “terrible suffering and dying in Ukraine”. But that meant offering Russia negotiations, she said, “instead of a never-ending war of attrition with ever newer weapons”. She said her childhood fears of a nuclear war in the 1980s had been revived by the current conflict. The risk of the expansion of the war across Europe and possibly the world was “very big”.

Two weeks ago Wagenknecht and Schwarzer had published a “Manifest for Peace” in which they urged Chancellor Scholz to “stop the escalation in weapons deliveries”. It has so far been signed by about 650,000 people, including prominent intellectuals and political figures.

They had been criticised in recent days after suggesting that “anyone whose heart beat for peace” would be welcome to the demonstration, after far-right groups expressed their desire to attend.

On Twitter, the far-right populist AfD party posted a picture of Jörg Urban, its chairman for Saxony, at the Brandenburg Gate, next to the symbol of a dove of peace, stating: “A year after the start of the war we finally need serious efforts towards peace negotiations instead of more escalation!” It added it was “alarming” that those who called for peace were being discredited as traitors.

Jürgen Elsässer, editor-in-chief of Compact, a magazine directly representing the AfD, was also present. Police intervened at the start of the demonstration to break up a scuffle as anti-fascist demonstrators tried to exclude him and his entourage.

Most people don’t know or forget the history of warfare against Russia. It has been obscured by the massive amount of anti-Russia propaganda that has been used to make Russia the evil incarnate in this conflict. But the war has dragged on for too long to smother the truth and that is not good for the collective west. Because history is not easy to obscure. And Europeans themselves can begin to find out the truth for themselves.

Part of the impetus for that is the realization that the collective west has been hoodwinked by the propagandists. First of all, the Ukrainians are not winning as asserted by Kyiv and the western media that parrot that line. Confirmation of the situation in the battlefield has emerged. Today, Zelensky fired his supreme commander, according to the horse's mouth, the Ukrainska Pravda:

Zelensky fired commander of joint forces

KATERYNA TYSHCHENKO — *SUNDAY, 26 FEBRUARY 2023, 22:43*

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has fired Eduard Moskaliyov from the post of commander of the joint forces.

Source: President's [decree](#) on the President's website

Quote: "To fire Eduard Mykhailovych Moskaliyov from the position of commander of the joint forces."

Background: On 15 March 2022, Zelenskyy appointed the commander of the joint forces, Oleksandr Pavliuk, as the Head of the Kyiv Oblast Military Administration.

Major General Eduard Moskaliyov became the commander of the joint forces.

Why would this happen at this juncture in the war if Ukraine were winning? You would keep the commander who is enabling your side to win. Obviously, all the BS in the western mainstream media cannot explain this away. It is clear that the Ukrainian Armed Forces is not capable of holding back the advancing Russians and this has been fully expected by the alternative media since Feb 2022. But in the year-long fake narrative created by propaganda, the story or perhaps the pipe-dream, of progress made by the Ukrainians to turn back a fumbling Russian army is widely believed. But that fable cannot hold up when hundreds of dead Ukrainian soldiers are showing up in the Donbass every day and that army is running out of ammo.

Someone has to be called to accountability.

Evidently, the commander (Moskaliyov) who is losing ground to the enemy is being made the scapegoat. Too many brave soldiers under his charge have been killed. Can there be any other explanation? Or perhaps he is being held accountable for using more ammunition in a month that can be replaced by all of Ukraine's allies in a whole year of manufacturing. The war will end soon in defeat under those circumstances. The way the collective west has been projecting through the last 12 months is taking the wrong turn. This failure of western arms in Ukraine will come as a massive shock to the citizenry and it starts with the most informed of those citizens who are now showing up in protests against the political elite.

The citizenry of Germany is already asking the next question. Why are we in this shit-hole? Fought the Russians in the 1940's, lost that one badly, and now we are being dragged into another one? By morons like Baerbock? Or warmongers like Biden?

The mood in Europe is turning against the war not just in Germany but in all the major EU countries, as can be seen from this article below.

Anti-NATO, Anti-EU, Anti-War, Protest Rallies Hit Germany, France, Italy

in World — by Countercurrents Collective — 27/02/2023

Rallies against the U.S.-led NATO bloc, the EU, supply of weapons to Ukraine and anti-war have been held across France, and in Italy and Germany. At protest sites, demonstrators defaced and tore down NATO and EU flags.

Berlin

Tens of thousands of Germans braved the elements to attend the Uprising for Peace, a massive rally organized by Die Linke (Left Party) politician Sahra Wagenknecht and author Alice Schwarzer on Saturday.

The demonstrators massed at the Brandenburg Gate, calling for peace talks to end the conflict in Ukraine and demanding Berlin cease supplying Kiev with weapons.

Wagenknecht slammed the German government for trying to “ruin Russia,” urging leaders to make Moscow an “offer” so that peace talks could begin. The rally, she said, represented the “start of a citizens’ initiative” and the launch of a “new, strong peace movement in Germany.”

The rally welcomed protesters from across the political spectrum, declaring anyone who wanted peace “with an honest heart” was welcome, though neo-Nazi provocateurs jostling for media attention were not.

The organizers counted some 50,000 participants, while the police gave a lowball figure of 13,000.

Wagenknecht and Schwarzer earlier this month published a Manifest for Peace urging Chancellor Olaf Scholz to “stop the escalation in weapons deliveries.” It has since been signed by over half a million people, including well-known public intellectuals and political figures.

Scholz has repeatedly declared peace talks to be outside the realm of possibility, insisting that it is Russia that is unwilling to come to the table, despite Moscow’s many attempts since the start of the conflict to resolve things peacefully.

Flowers To Blown-up Russian tank



The people of Berlin have turned a blown-up Russian tank, placed in front of Moscow's embassy in the German capital by supporters of Kiev, into a memorial to victims of the fighting in Ukraine by covering the crippled vehicle with flowers.

The T-72 tank appeared in central Berlin on Friday – the first anniversary of the conflict in Ukraine, which broke out on February 24, 2022.

Activists from the Berlin Story Bunker museum had won a lengthy legal battle against the city authorities, to be able to carry out the stunt.

The tank, which is said to have been damaged by a mine in the Kiev suburb of Bucha in late March and later transported to Germany, was intended to symbolize Russia's failure in Ukraine, the museum's curator Wieland Giebel explained. "This tank means that the Russian regime will crumble, it will turn into a pile of junk, just like this tank," Giebel said.

However, people in Berlin, who took to the streets in their thousands on Saturday to decry the supply of weapons by Germany to Kiev forces, gave a different interpretation. They brought numerous flowers to the tank, and put anti-war banners on it, including: "Make peace, not war."

Russia's Embassy in Berlin posted on Telegram on Sunday that the "provocation" organized by supporters of Ukraine "did not meet understanding, support and sympathy of the German citizens."

They "unambiguously spoke out in favor of a settlement of the Ukrainian conflict, against escalation by pumping the Kiev regime with German weapons," it said.

The Russian diplomats thanked everybody who laid flowers on the tank, which it said became "a symbol of the fight against Neo-Nazism in Ukraine."

Russia's Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova claimed that the Ukrainian government of Vladimir Zelensky and its Western backers have allocated "millions" for various stunts dedicated to the anniversary of the conflict. Most of this money has been "stolen," while the installations that were made using the remaining sums turned out to be "so talentless that they backfired," she wrote on Telegram.

In recent months, Moscow has repeatedly stressed its readiness to seek a diplomatic solution to the crisis. However, the government has accused Kiev and the West of making “unacceptable” proposals that showed that they were not interested in peace.

Nuremberg

Several hundred people marched through the Bavarian city of Nuremberg on January 30, protesting against Berlin’s move to provide Ukraine with heavy arms, including Leopard 2 tanks. Participants voiced concerns that Germany could end up being dragged into a massive war with Russia as a result.

Protesters chanted slogans and beating drums. One of the banners caught on camera read “We are the red line.”

Police were observing the event, with no clashes or arrests reported.

One of the demonstrators said that “Ukraine will not be able to pay” for the weapons provided by the West. He argued that it is the Germans who will have to pick up the tab.

“If we Germans get involved in a war, and I personally do not have a war with Russia, then for us Germans, based on history, it is the worst sign that we can send,” he told.

According to the demonstrator, “no war must go through Germany, neither with arms deliveries nor anything else, because otherwise, Germany will be in the middle of it again.” The latter, he claimed, is just what “America wants.”

The march came after Chancellor Scholz announced last Wednesday his decision to ship fourteen Leopard 2A6 tanks from Germany’s own stock to Kiev. Berlin also said that it would authorize other countries in possession of the hardware to do the same.

The announcement marked a major U-turn by Germany, which had for months refused to give Ukraine tanks, citing the risk of uncontrollable escalation.

In recent weeks, however, pressure on Berlin mounted both from the U.S. and some fellow NATO member states such as Poland. Last Thursday, German Defense Minister Boris Pistorius revealed that the German armor is expected to arrive in Ukraine as early as late March. Meanwhile, Scholz explained that Berlin’s goal in the eastern European country is to ensure that Russia does not “succeed in changing borders through force.”

France

Media reports said:

Multiple mass protests against France’s NATO membership and its continued support of Kiev were held on Sunday in the capital Paris and at other locations across the country.

The demonstrations, taking place for the second consecutive weekend, were organized by the right-wing Les Patriotes party, led by Florian Philippot, who personally attended the rally in Paris.

The politician claimed the event on Sunday, dubbed National March for Peace, attracted even more participants than last week, when some 10,000 showed up for a rally in the French capital. According to Philippot, smaller-scale anti-NATO protests were held at some 30 other locations across France as well.

Protesters marched through the streets of Paris, carrying a large banner reading “For Peace.”

The marchers called for the withdrawal of France from both the U.S.-led NATO and from the EU, and urged a halt to supplying Ukraine with weaponry.

The protesters also took jabs at the incumbent French President Emmanuel Macron, chanting “Macron get out” – a slogan commonly used by assorted anti-government protesters throughout his presidency.

Following the march, the protesters held a rally led by Philippot, who was filmed defacing NATO and EU flags alongside his supporters. Footage of the event was shared by the politician himself on social media.

The politician has been actively staging protests against French membership in NATO and the EU since last fall, while arguing against the supply of weapons to Ukraine.

Between 2012 and 2017, Philippot was the deputy head of the biggest opposition party in France, the National Rally, led until last year by Marine Le Pen. After leaving the National Rally, the 41-year-old politician established his own right-wing party, Les Patriotes.

France has been among the top supporters of Kiev in the ongoing conflict with Russia, which broke out a year ago. While Macron has repeatedly called for a diplomatic settlement of the hostilities, Paris has actively supplied assorted weaponry to Ukraine, including armored vehicles and advanced self-propelled howitzers.

Protest Outside Major U.S. Airbase In EU

Media reports also said:

Several hundred people gathered on Sunday outside Ramstein U.S. airbase in southwestern Germany to demand an end to weapons shipments to Ukraine. The military site is where Western officials have regularly held meetings over the past year to coordinate their aid to Kiev.

The demonstrators also called for a cessation of hostilities and peace talks between Ukraine and Russia.

They chanted slogans and beat drums, with an assortment of banners seen during a live stream of the event on YouTube, including the Russian and Soviet flags.

The placards called for the Americans to “go home,” and also featured slogans including “Freedom to Julian Assange” and “Stop the weapons deliveries.”

When the rally organizers notified the local authorities several days before the event, they said they expected it to kick off at midday and conclude around 5:30pm, with around 2,000 attending.

Ramstein air base has repeatedly made headlines since Russia launched its military campaign against Ukraine a year ago. It is where the U.S.-led Ukraine Defence Contact Group has held its meetings aimed at shoring up the Ukrainian military. The last such gathering took place on January 20.

Munich

Earlier this month, approximately 10,000 people took to the streets of Munich for a similarly themed rally just outside of the Bayerische Hof Hotel, where world leaders convened for the Munich Security Conference. Further military support for Ukraine was among the topics high on their agenda.

Among the speakers addressing the crowd was former Christian Democratic MP Juergen Todenhoefer, who argued that “we have to serve peace not Americans.”

Much like the latest event outside Ramstein air base on Sunday, the demonstrators in Munich also called for American troops to leave Germany.

Italy

Media reports said:

Several thousand people turned up for peace demonstrations in the Italian cities of Genoa and Milan on Saturday. Union members and left-wing activists claimed, among other things, that authorities in Rome have breached national law by sending weapons to Ukraine.

The rally in Genoa drew nearly 4,000 participants from across the country as well as from Switzerland and France, local media reported.

Organized by the Collective Autonomous Port Workers (CALP) group with the support of the Italian communist party, the protest took place under the slogan “Lower weapons, raise wages.”

CALP’s Riccardo Rudino was cited in the media as saying that the “the conflict in the Ukraine did not begin last year” but rather “in 2014, with the massacre of the Russian-speaking population in Donbass.”

The demonstrators filed through the port of Genoa, demanding an end to the use of the facility for arms shipments destined for Ukraine.

CALP spokesperson Jose Nivoi accused the Italian government of violating law 185 of 1990, which “imposed a ban on the import, export and transit of weapons from Italy to states at war.”

The group’s representatives also described how they had been networking with like-minded “associations and activists in various European cities.”

The procession went off without serious incidents, marred only by a few acts of vandalism at the hands of anarchists, who smeared and damaged several vehicles and broke windows in a bank.

A protest was also held on Saturday in Milan. Several hundred people chanting slogans and waving flags, including those of Russia and the Donetsk People’s Republic marched in the protest rally.

The demonstrations in Italy coincided with one in the German capital, Berlin.

In the confusion that is emerging from Europe, there is no leadership anywhere to end the war. So of all people, the Chinese, are providing a peace plan. WTF? That plan was published last Friday.

China’s Position on the Political Settlement of the Ukraine Crisis

2023-02-24 09:00

1. Respecting the sovereignty of all countries. *Universally recognized international law, including the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter, must be strictly observed. The sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of all countries must be effectively upheld. All countries, big or small, strong or weak, rich or poor, are equal members of the international community. All parties should jointly uphold the basic norms governing international relations and defend international fairness and justice. Equal and uniform application of international law should be promoted, while double standards must be rejected.*

2. Abandoning the Cold War mentality. *The security of a country should not be pursued at the expense of others. The security of a region should not be achieved by strengthening or expanding military blocs. The legitimate security interests and concerns of all countries must be taken seriously and addressed properly. There is no simple solution to a complex issue. All parties should, following the vision of common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security and bearing in mind the long-term peace*

and stability of the world, help forge a balanced, effective and sustainable European security architecture. All parties should oppose the pursuit of one's own security at the cost of others' security, prevent bloc confrontation, and work together for peace and stability on the Eurasian Continent.

3. Ceasing hostilities. *Conflict and war benefit no one. All parties must stay rational and exercise restraint, avoid fanning the flames and aggravating tensions, and prevent the crisis from deteriorating further or even spiraling out of control. All parties should support Russia and Ukraine in working in the same direction and resuming direct dialogue as quickly as possible, so as to gradually deescalate the situation and ultimately reach a comprehensive ceasefire.*

4. Resuming peace talks. *Dialogue and negotiation are the only viable solution to the Ukraine crisis. All efforts conducive to the peaceful settlement of the crisis must be encouraged and supported. The international community should stay committed to the right approach of promoting talks for peace, help parties to the conflict open the door to a political settlement as soon as possible, and create conditions and platforms for the resumption of negotiation. China will continue to play a constructive role in this regard.*

5. Resolving the humanitarian crisis. *All measures conducive to easing the humanitarian crisis must be encouraged and supported. Humanitarian operations should follow the principles of neutrality and impartiality, and humanitarian issues should not be politicized. The safety of civilians must be effectively protected, and humanitarian corridors should be set up for the evacuation of civilians from conflict zones. Efforts are needed to increase humanitarian assistance to relevant areas, improve humanitarian conditions, and provide rapid, safe and unimpeded humanitarian access, with a view to preventing a humanitarian crisis on a larger scale. The UN should be supported in playing a coordinating role in channeling humanitarian aid to conflict zones.*

6. Protecting civilians and prisoners of war (POWs). *Parties to the conflict should strictly abide by international humanitarian law, avoid attacking civilians or civilian facilities, protect women, children and other victims of the conflict, and respect the basic rights of POWs. China supports the exchange of POWs between Russia and Ukraine, and calls on all parties to create more favorable conditions for this purpose.*

7. Keeping nuclear power plants safe. *China opposes armed attacks against nuclear power plants or other peaceful nuclear facilities, and calls on all parties to comply with international law including the Convention on Nuclear Safety (CNS) and resolutely avoid man-made nuclear accidents. China supports the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in playing a constructive role in promoting the safety and security of peaceful nuclear facilities.*

8. Reducing strategic risks. *Nuclear weapons must not be used and nuclear wars must not be fought. The threat or use of nuclear weapons should be opposed. Nuclear proliferation must be prevented and nuclear crisis avoided. China opposes the research, development and use of chemical and biological weapons by any country under any circumstances.*

9. Facilitating grain exports. *All parties need to implement the Black Sea Grain Initiative signed by Russia, Türkiye, Ukraine and the UN fully and effectively in a balanced manner, and support the UN in playing an important role in this regard. The cooperation initiative on global food security proposed by China provides a feasible solution to the global food crisis.*

10. Stopping unilateral sanctions. *Unilateral sanctions and maximum pressure cannot solve the issue; they only create new problems. China opposes unilateral sanctions unauthorized by the UN Security Council. Relevant countries should stop abusing unilateral sanctions and "long-arm jurisdiction" against other countries, so as to do their share in deescalating the Ukraine crisis and create conditions for developing countries to grow their economies and better the lives of their people.*

11. Keeping industrial and supply chains stable. *All parties should earnestly maintain the existing world economic system and oppose using the world economy as a tool or weapon for political purposes. Joint efforts are needed to mitigate the spillovers of the crisis and prevent it from disrupting international cooperation in energy, finance, food trade and transportation and undermining the global economic recovery.*

12. Promoting post-conflict reconstruction. *The international community needs to take measures to support post-conflict reconstruction in conflict zones. China stands ready to provide assistance and play a constructive role in this endeavor.*

The big shots of the west, like the disingenuous Boris Johnson, and the senile Biden have only been shouting war slogans, just as Napoleon did when he hid behind the slogan of liberte, equalite and fraternite, as he marched 600,000 Grand Armees troops across Europe to capture Moscow, 200 years ago. It is still the same hypocrisy.

If anybody should provide a peace plan in a European war, it should be Europeans. The fact that China is providing one, it is a major embarrassment for the Continent. They don't like it. Not because it is not a good plan, but because China should not be leading Europe.

The Ukrainians did not criticise the Chinese plan but everybody else in the collective west said it was no good, mostly because the Chinese never condemned Russia. That is warped logic – you must first condemn Russia before you can make a peace proposal? So by that logic, no western country is qualified to make a peace proposal? So how will it ever end? Or they don't want it to end?

Or they just don't want peace to be brought about by an outsider, China.

As a matter of fact, there is panic over the fact that it is China who is taking the lead to propose a peace plan for Ukraine. Where are the Continent's own leaders to end this senseless war? Where is America, leader of the free world?

The way I see it, the warmongers' attempt to bury Russia using Ukraine as an excuse is running out of steam, and the neo-con Project Ukraine is failing. How it ends will be Europe's own citizens leading their political class out of it. If the Berlin protests and similar ones in Paris and Italy as well as a smaller one in Washington DC the previous weekend are an indication of things to come, it is because there are European citizens who have a better sense of history than their leaders. And from them, there may emanate peace along the lines of the Chinese proposal, even if that is not acceptable today.

One day, there will be another book with the title, War and Peace, and it will be on Ukraine. It will not be a novel like the one written by Tolstoy. It will be written by an erudite historian. And the gist of the book will be that the war was sparked by a collective west who are scared of the Russians, and wanted a chance to cripple it once and for all, on the excuse that they are helping Ukraine. That's the "war" part. For the "peace" part, the book will say that Europe's own citizens rebelled against their political class and followed Chinese diplomacy to end the war.

But unlike Tolstoy's tome, this future book will have just a few pages, because the issues are so straightforward. And there will be nothing much to write about.

Alternatively, one day, an economist will write that 2023 was the year in which China took over leadership of the global economy because they, unlike the previous hegemon, found a paradigm of peace for global economic development to flourish.

Good vibes? I think so.

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Un-Influencer in a World full of Hubris