

Russo-Ukrainian War Stalemate



by Ralph Berry

‘Diplomacy is more than the iteration of insistences.’ The then Foreign Minister for Israel was widely praised for this pronouncement, some years ago. It was seen as a pithy, well-phrased statement of an eternal value system. Since then, it has fallen out of favour, with the notable exception of the late Henry Kissinger. Of the many illustrations that come to hand. I cite the Russo-Ukrainian war.

Is there a more demented war aim than the official Ukraine policy?

Russia, a great European power which destroyed Nazi Germany, is urged to admit defeat by a recalcitrant province. It must slink off to the sidelines of Ukraine, there to squat like a malignant incubus for the rest of time. Meantime the

Ukrainians, buoyed by Western arms and wealth will enjoy the fruits of victory. Russia will be cut dead by all respectable countries.

A likely tale.

Russia is not remotely near to losing the war. It is surrounded by countries, especially African, that are ready and willing to do business. India had a warm relationship with the Soviet Union in the old days, not forgotten yet. Russia speaks openly of its readiness for peace negotiations, and their position will demand a large chunk of Donbas plus the essential Crimea naval base. It is more important than ever in today's heightened sense of marine warfare.

All this is anathema to the rulers of Ukraine, for whom the admitted loss of a single metre would be a political disaster. In fact, the peoples of Crimea and Donbass are ethnically quite ready for Russian rule. So, the notoriously corrupt Ukrainian system remains in power—there is a single more corrupt country in Europe, Russia—serving the interests of the Zelensky court and few others.

It is widely assumed that the impasse will end when the US Government makes its big move. Till then 'the shorn and parcelled' Ukraine must make the best of it. There cannot be long to go. . .