Jell-O

by

*Eyes Right*

**Washington, D.C. –** What is the only thing less malleable than Jell-O? My immediate response would be, “The borders of European countries.”

I begin with this thought because of the ongoing search to develop a solution for the war in Ukraine. Most western nations profess to want an immediate end for many reasons, not the least of which is the possibility of the war degenerating into yet another European-fueled world war. President Trump has repeatedly warned about the possibility of this war evolving into World War III. Most European leaders also claim to be seeking an end to the war in Ukraine, but their only current solution simply involves providing further arms and money to allow the Ukrainians to continue fighting. It is a convenient position, of course, because, from their perspective, revanchist Russians occupied with fighting Ukrainians are not Russians attacking other Europeans.

Recently, President Trump and Vice-President Vance met in the Oval Office with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky. The original intent was to sign an agreement providing the United States with rights to Ukrainian minerals with the U.S. then working with Russian President Putin to secure a cease-fire, hopefully followed by a negotiated peace agreement. This plan did not happen and the meeting quickly, in front of television cameras, became acrimonious. Various explanations for the dissolution of the meeting have been offered with blame being focused on different participants by different interested parties. It appears that what is certain is that President Trump had no intention of committing the U.S. to providing guarantees against future Russian aggression and that President Zelensky would sign nothing without such guarantees.

It also appears that Zelensky and his leadership team are not ready to concede any territory to the invading Russians. Apparently, they are of the belief that the Russians will willingly pack up and leave the two eastern Ukrainian provinces and the Crimea which they currently hold. I cannot imagine any scenario in which Putin surrenders territory his troops now control. Such a move would be in exchange for what? In view of the large number of Russian soldiers killed and wounded in the past three years, his surrender of gained territory would not be a palatable outcome to any Russian.

Pause for a moment to try to understand the Russian position. For years since the breakup of the former Soviet Union, the Ukrainian government ruled its eastern provinces containing large numbers of Russians and Russian sympathizers with, to be charitable, an iron hand. The reaction in Russia was to find a way to aid what they considered brutally oppressed friends. It would be as if Americans, or American ex-pats living across our border in Ontario were being harmed by Canadian government forces. Sooner or later, U.S. patience would wear thin, and our forces would enter Canada to “fix it”, quickly followed by an irredentist takeover of that land.

European borders have a long history of provoking wars. Look no further than Poland, or Germany, or France, or the Baltic States. I have written several times in these pages that NO ONE OWNS LAND. *You simply occupy it until someone with a larger gun comes along to take it from you.* Ask American Indians about this. Ask Palestinians in the Gaza, ask the Indigenous peoples of South America. There has been no time in recorded history where or when a nation has enjoyed perpetual ownership of a particular piece of land. Sooner or later, someone comes along with superior forces to take it from you. Simply look at World Atlases since the Middle Ages – it will show you a moveable feast of boundary changes.

Accordingly, my advice for President Zelensky is to recognize reality and take the best deal remaining. He has zero chance of retaining land currently held by the Russians. Proceeding further with this war will only diminish his already depleted population and risk further land loss.

To the rest of the world, I also have advice. Stop wringing your hands about the terrible Russians and use your energy and treasury to obtain your own “larger guns.” The ONLY preventative measure to preserve the land that you are now on is a robust defense.

I thought you might like to know.

E-R