

The Israel attack shows the catastrophic consequences of appeasement. The only way to secure peace is strength

By Stephen Pollard, The Daily Mail, 14 April 2024

Time and again, our leaders make the same mistakes.

History should have taught them long ago that appeasement emboldens dictators. The only way to make ourselves secure is by arming ourselves properly and responding to aggression with dauntless courage.

[Iran](#) has felt emboldened to launch this ferocious attack for one key reason: the West has spent years trying to placate its odious mullahs, rather than making it clear that their malign actions will have sharp consequences.

In recent weeks, all too belatedly, President Biden has stated that Washington's commitment to [Israel](#) is 'iron-clad'.



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People holding Iranian flags gather in Tehran today to stage a demonstration in support of Iran's attack on Israel



Moment Iran began its 300-missile attack on Israel is revealed



Inside Iran's frightening £800m war chest



Biden tells Netanyahu US will NOT support Israeli counterattack

Thankfully it proved so in the early hours of this morning, when the US – along with the UK and, vitally, Jordan – shot down Iranian drones and missiles heading for Israel.

But if only Biden's resolve had been as 'iron-clad' when he entered the Oval Office three years ago.

Instead, he has spent his tenure pursuing a wrong-headed, dangerous and hopelessly naive approach to the bearded theocrats of Iran.

If I can briefly recap what happened: in May 2018, President [Donald Trump](#) pulled America out of the nuclear deal with Iran that his predecessor [Barack Obama](#) had negotiated in 2015 (the vice-president back then, of course, being [Joe Biden](#)).

Under that deal, sanctions on Tehran were lifted in the hope that the mullahs would honour their 'promise' not to pursue a nuclear-weapons programme.

Obama's approach was utter folly. The mullahs' coffers were soon filling up thanks to the lifting of sanctions and – just as opponents of his deal had warned – Iran was once again enthusiastically funding and training its bloodthirsty proxy groups, from Hezbollah in Lebanon to Hamas in Gaza.

Experts, meanwhile, warned that its supposedly 'civil' nuclear programme was in fact a weapons project in disguise.

Trump rightly tore up Obama's deal, facing down hysterical objections from co-signatories Britain, France and Germany. But The Donald's approach worked.

Trump's sanctions shrunk Iran's economy by 4.8 per cent in 2018 and 9.5 per cent in 2019 – diminishing the wider threat to the Middle East.

But after Biden was inaugurated in 2021, he resumed talks on a renewed deal. And although the sanctions have not been formally lifted, their enforcement has been weakened, sending an implicit message to Iran's Supreme Leader, Ali Khamenei, that the US was no longer serious about imposing them.

Iran has since vastly expanded its oil exports, largely to China – just as it has escalated its malign behaviour in Gaza, Lebanon and now from its own soil.

We need to learn some lessons here. When Neville Chamberlain signed the Munich agreement in 1938, Hitler felt empowered to invade Poland.

When Vladimir Putin annexed Crimea in 2014, the West stood back and watched – galvanising him to launch an all-out invasion of Ukraine in 2022.

And now Israel has been attacked on its own soil once again after Biden undid Trump's good work in standing up to the mad mullahs.

The world is growing too dangerous for us to keep repeating this mistake.