

How Donald Trump Just Changed the Course of History

If someone else had been in the White House, this crisis could have easily turned out much differently.

Sadly, most Americans have no idea that we were literally on the brink of the beginning of World War III this week. In fact, our population is so clueless about the rest of the world that 75% of all registered voters can't even find Iran "on an unlabeled map of the globe." We literally live in an "idiocracy" where one-third of the country can't even name a single branch of government. For most Americans, the alarming headlines about Iran will soon fade from memory, and they will just go on with their lives as if nothing really happened. But the truth is that we were right on the precipice of a cataclysmic war that could have resulted in millions upon millions of deaths. And a major war in the Middle East could still start at literally any time, but President Trump's brave decision has at least delayed it for now.

When Iran fired more than a dozen ballistic missiles at U.S. bases in Iraq, it would have been so easy for President Trump to order an immediate military response.

But he didn't.

Instead, he waited for an accurate damage assessment to be completed, and it turned out that no Americans had been killed or injured.

The Iranians possess very accurate weapons, and so at first a lot of people were quite puzzled by this. But then later on it started to become obvious that the Iranians "may have intentionally missed" their targets. In other words, this attack was essentially the equivalent of "a warning shot":

Iran may have intentionally missed targets on bases in Iraq to avoid significant U.S. casualties and damage to infrastructure, according to U.S. government sources.

Iran appears to have fired the missiles into vacant areas where they were unlikely to cause significant harm, according to a U.S. official who was not authorized to speak publicly. The attack, the official said, was designed mainly for a domestic audience to show Iranians that the regime was responding to the killing last week of Iranian Gen. Qasem Soleimani.

Iranian leadership had to show the Iranian people that they were “taking revenge” for the death of Soleimani.

But by choosing not to spill any American blood, they presented Donald Trump with an opportunity to walk away without escalating the conflict into a full-blown war.

And the Iranians made doubly sure that no American blood would be spilled by issuing a warning in advance:

PM Adel Abdul Mahdi received a call from Tehran warning him an attack was imminent in retaliation for the US killing of its highest ranking general, his spokesman said.

CNN, citing an Arab diplomatic source, said that Iraqi officials then passed the information on to US troops before the attack began.

Subsequently, when the missile strikes were over, the Iranians notified the U.S. government “through at least three back channels” that there would be no more attacks:

Iran initiated contact through at least three back channels starting late Tuesday, including through Switzerland and other countries. There were “multiple messages and they were all the same,” a person familiar with the matter said. Iran

wanted to convey their retaliatory action had ended – and was waiting to see how the US would respond.

If Hillary Clinton had been in the Oval Office during these very tense moments, we would probably be at war with Iran right now.

But Donald Trump is not Hillary Clinton.

In both of my articles yesterday, I explained that this was a golden opportunity for President Trump to avert a major war, and I was hoping that his advisers were telling him this. Since no American blood was spilled, both sides could still walk away and claim victory, and that is precisely what happened on Wednesday:

President Donald Trump announced Wednesday that there would be increased sanctions but no retaliatory strikes for Iran's ballistic missile assault on U.S. bases in Iraq. Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, said, "For the time being, the Americans have been given a slap," but no other attacks were coming soon. Both sides have relaxed tensions, and the threat of war has receded.

In the end, President Trump is coming out of this looking really good. Soleimani is dead, and Iran's "revenge" did not take a single American life.

But if Trump had recklessly ordered a retaliatory strike against Iran, the Iranians had already warned that they were going to launch missiles at Israel.

And once the first missile landed in an Israeli city, the Israelis would have responded with overwhelming force. Just check out what Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on Wednesday:

Israel will strike back hard if Iran attacks, Prime Minister

Benjamin Netanyahu warned at the Kohelet Policy Forum's conference on Wednesday.

"The state of Israel is the stable anchor in the stormy [Middle East] waters," Netanyahu said. "We stand firm in the face of those who seek to destroy us. Anyone who tries to attack us will suffer the most overwhelming blow."

When we get to the point where missiles are flying back and forth between Iran and Israel, nobody is going to be able to stop the madness.

And we are still on the brink of global chaos, but at least President Trump has given us a chance to avoid a worst-case scenario.

In the aftermath of the events of the past two days, Franklin Graham posted the following message of gratitude to President Trump on Facebook:

Thank you Mr. President for addressing our nation today and for giving peace a chance. I'm sure there are millions of Iranians who would like to thank you too, if they could. The Islamic Republic of Iran is a dangerous government and is responsible for exporting the Islamic revolution to many countries around the world. They have also repeatedly vowed to wipe Israel off the face of the earth. I know you probably had lot of pressure from some to respond quickly and with a heavy hand; but thank you for showing restraint. A former premier of France once said, "It is far easier to make war than peace." I also appreciate the fact that you made it clear that as long as you are president, Iran will not have a nuclear weapon. Please be assured of my prayers and those of many Christians across the country and around the world.

You know, for once it would be nice for the Democrats to also acknowledge that President Trump has done something right.

Yes, we understand that this is an election season and that the Democrats are going to look for every opportunity to criticize Trump. But we are all Americans, and this week we were just moments away from the start of a cataclysmic war with Iran.

President Trump's wise decision has kept us out of such a war for now, and for that he should be greatly applauded. {eo}

This article originally appeared at the Economic Collapse Blog.