

Praying for Peace In a Biden-Influenced Middle East

There is hope that Joe Biden will pause before jettisoning policies that have advanced peace in the Middle East more effectively than anything since Camp David in 1978.

by Conrad Black



As sane Americans reluctantly resign themselves to the approach of an unimaginable Joe Biden presidency, the unrelenting blitzkrieg of media Trump-hate is occasionally, but each week more frequently, punctured by glimmers of recognition of what the apparently outgoing president has achieved. There seems to be a consensus, even embracing many Democrats, that President Trump has scored a significant success with the Abraham Accords in the Middle East.

This subject is a perfect illustration of the total failure of Barack Obama's foreign policy, which Biden proudly embraces, and the corresponding success that President Trump enjoyed in pursuing the exact opposite course. President Obama inexplicably concluded that the best policy for the United

States to pursue in the Middle East was to request that the principal countries simply change roles.

The ayatollahs in Tehran would magically become friends of the United States because the Peter Pan in the White House wished it so. Israel, America's principal friend in the region and one of the sturdiest allies in the world, could simply repair to the doghouse for obstinately insisting on its right to persevere as it was set up by the United Nations originally, including the unanimous permanent founding members of the Security Council, as a Jewish state.

Some of the architects of this catastrophic policy, including the presumptive president-elect, are coming back, and unfortunately are not, as they should be, wearing bells on their heads like medieval lepers to warn the chancelleries of the world of their approach. John Kerry, Antony Blinken, and Joe Biden himself all profess to believe in the Iranian nuclear arrangement, under which the United States deluged Iran with \$150 billion in previously frozen assets in reprisal against its illegal promotion of international terrorism, and the signatory powers (the United States, Britain, France, China, Russia, and Germany) granted Iran 10 years before it placed nuclear warheads on its intermediate and long-range missiles.

Trump withdrew from that agreement and reimposed sanctions on Iran for its terrorist activities, and as a result Hezbollah in Lebanon, Hamas in Gaza, the Palestinian Authority in the West Bank, and the Houthi in Yemen have all been comparatively starved for money and, by their squalid and barbarous standards, they have been relatively well-behaved.

The Iran agreement now has only five years to run. It is completely inadequately monitored by inspectors, and even some of the more vocal Trump-hating Biden cheerleaders are counseling the Democratic candidate to think twice about returning to that baneful agreement.

Even Tom Friedman of the *New York Times*, a former Middle East correspondent who once advised that the whole problem could be solved by giving all of the Palestinians laptop computers, and famously announced that the completely fictitious collusion between Trump and Russia in 2016 was as great a violation of U.S. sovereignty as the attacks on Pearl Harbor and the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, has cautioned Biden about trying to revive that agreement.

The Obama-Biden policy incited Iran to encroach more aggressively upon the Arab world rather than to become more cooperative and conciliatory with the West. The renewed threat to the Arabs of their ancient Persian foe, especially as the Iranians were partially in league with the Arabs' other enemies of many centuries, the Turks, naturally diluted Arab hostility to Israel, which eagerly reciprocated the overtures of the Arab powers.

President Trump judged the direction of events correctly. He and his son-in-law, Jared Kushner, have sponsored a particular rapprochement between Israel and Saudi Arabia. Trump saw that the pan-Arab support of the Palestinians had nothing to do with what the Arab powers really thought of the Palestinians, which is that, like the Jews and the Lebanese Christians, they are a commercially sharp and often irritating people. Trump knew that the histrionic patronization by the Arab powers of the Palestinian cause was essentially a distraction of the Arab masses from the misgovernment most of them were receiving from their rulers, and he promoted the solidarity of the Arabs and the Israelis against the naked aggression of the Iranians and the Ottoman imperial pretensions of the Turks.

Bahrain, Morocco, and the United Arab Emirates have all exchanged embassies with Israel and it is clear that this is a process that will spread, if it is not suffocated by the stupidity of the returning Democrats in Washington and their reverence for insipid appeasement of the brutal antediluvian theocracy in Tehran.

There is probably some reason to hope that Biden will pause before jettisoning the policies that have advanced peace in the Middle East more effectively than anything since President Carter's success at Camp David in 1978. Even though former defense secretary and CIA director Robert Gates, a bipartisan career foreign and security policy expert, mentioned without animosity in his memoirs that Joe Biden has been wrong on every major national security issue for 40 years, and even though Kerry and others are still raving about moving the American Embassy in Israel to Jerusalem, Biden has never been anything but flexible, to a fault, on all policy matters. He professes to be an ardent Roman Catholic, who wishes to require Roman Catholic institutions to pay for the abortions of its students and employees, having long opposed federal funding for abortions. He was opposed to the mission to kill Osama bin Laden but was happy that he was killed. He has never held any executive position, nor shown respect for any criterion for the resolution of public policy questions except raising a moist finger heavenwards while consulting the pollsters.

Biden has never been at the head of anything so it is impossible to be confident that he is not highly suggestible; and the people he has announced to date who will be advising him are an infestation of those most redolent, as Biden himself is, with the many foreign policy failures of the Obama regime. But if Tom Friedman is onside, then any invertebrate may grow a spine.

When Russian Prime Minister Ivan Goremykin was told in 1914 by Czar Nicholas II that it was too late to halt mobilization, that it was time to pray, and that the preservation of the peace of Europe depended on his imperial cousin, German Emperor William II, the prime minister, a godly man, replied that if peace depended on Kaiser Wilhelm, then it was indeed time to pray. Histrionics are uncalled for and Joe Biden is certainly a more benign statesman and psychologically well-

balanced person than the last German emperor.

The American public, apparently, have confided the highest and most influential office within the gift of any free people on earth to Joe Biden. All the people of the world who believe in a divine intelligence, and especially the Americans among them, should spend an unprecedented amount of time and energy in fervent supplication until further notice.

First published in