

***Iran is gearing up to attack Britain and the West***  
***Con Coughlin - The Telegraph***

*With world attention understandably focused on the Ukraine crisis, we should not be surprised that rogue nations should be seeking to exploit the conflict in order to advance their own nefarious agendas.*



*Two Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps personnel pose in front of a flag © Provided by The Telegraph*

*For most of the past decade, British security officials, when asked to rank hostile states that threaten our national well being, have put Russia in first place, with China coming a close second. Other threats, such as those ***posed by Iran*** and North Korea, as well as the continuing challenge presented by militant Islamist groups, have been deemed less immediate while still worthy of close monitoring.*

*The suggestion, therefore, that the Islamic Republic of Iran is now regarded as posing the second most potent threat to Britain in security circles shows just how much progress the ayatollahs have made in developing their military strength while the rest of the world has been distracted by the tragic events unfolding in Ukraine.*

*Western security officials have been obliged to ***revise their assessment*** of the Iranian threat following the alarming revelation by nuclear inspectors that uranium particles enriched to 83.7 per cent purity have been discovered at Iran's Fordow plant, constructed deep beneath a mountain so that it cannot be targeted by Western air strikes.*

*The Fordow plant, which is specifically designed to enrich uranium and is located close to the holy city of Qom, was built in secret during the 2000s as an alternative to the Natanz facility, which fulfills a similar function. The Iranians desperately tried to conceal the existence of both plants from the United Nations, a clear breach of its obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Work on Fordow began soon after Natanz's existence was made public by opposition groups in 2002.*

*Another fiction that Tehran has tried to maintain over the past two decades or so is that it has no interest in developing nuclear weapons, and that all its nuclear activities are for peaceful objectives, such as providing alternative energy sources.*

*If that is the case, why have inspectors working for the UN-sponsored International Atomic Energy Agency found [traces of uranium](#) at Fordow that are just short of the 90 per cent enrichment level required to make nuclear weapons?*

*It is not the first time that inspectors have found undeclared traces of highly enriched uranium at Iranian facilities. Prior to the nuclear deal with Iran that the Barack Obama administration helped negotiate in 2015, the main cause of the stand-off between Iran and the West was Tehran's refusal to explain the discovery of enriched particles at several sites.*

*The latest discoveries must certainly lay to rest any prospect of reviving the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), the [flawed nuclear deal](#) the West hoped would limit Iran's nuclear ambitions. With experts warning that Iran could have enough material for a nuclear warhead within two weeks, it also means Britain and its allies need to give serious consideration to how they deal with the emerging threat to their security.*

*Indeed, apart from its nuclear aspirations, Iran has been working hard to develop an arsenal of ballistic weapons capable of hitting targets in the heart of Europe.*

*Iran's deepening desire to intensify its confrontation with the West is evident from the support [it has given Russia](#) in the Ukraine conflict, where Iranian drones have been involved in a number of attacks on Ukrainian infrastructure. US national security officials have warned that Iran is aiming to expand its military support by providing ballistic missiles.*

*Security sources have already reported that Tehran is supplying large quantities of bullets, rockets and mortar shells to sustain the Russian war effort.*

*At the same time, there is evidence that Iran is increasing its more low-level terrorist activities in Europe. The presence of Iranian hit squads in London sent to silence critics of the regime recently forced a prominent Iranian opposition channel to relocate to Washington.*

*The British authorities could not provide adequate protection, a worrying indication of the poor state of preparedness of our security services to deal with Iran's nefarious activities.*

*For far too long, the predominant view in Whitehall has been that the best way to contain the Iranian threat is to maintain a dialogue with the so-called "moderates" there in the hope that it will result in improved ties with the West.*

*Instead, all that has happened is that Iran has made significant advances in developing a nuclear threat, from acquiring weapons grade uranium to building ballistic missiles capable of carrying nuclear warheads. The success of these*

*developments, moreover, appears to have given the regime the confidence to adopt a more aggressive stance towards the West, one that, given the unpredictable nature of Iranian politics, must be a major cause for concern.*

*Rather than pandering to the ayatollahs, there now needs to be a major rethink of how we deal with Iran, one that takes full cognizance of the scale of Tehran's hostile intent.*