



Written by [Warren Mass](#) on March 30, 2016

Blair Calls for West to Send Ground Troops Against ISIS

Writing in Britain's *Sunday Times* for March 27, former UK Prime Minister Tony Blair (shown) said, "Where [Arab allies] need active on-the-ground military support from us, we should give it. They [ISIS] have to be crushed."



He continued:

We must build military capability able to confront and defeat the terrorists wherever they try to hold territory. This is not just about local forces. It is a challenge for the west. Ground forces are necessary to win this fight and ours are the most capable.

Excerpts from Blair's *Times* article (which is accessible only by subscribers) were quoted in Britain's *Guardian* and *Daily Mail*, and in Australia's *The Australian*.

The *Guardian* reported that UK officials are considering contributing 1,000 non-combat troops to a 5,000-member international force that will train the Libyan army in its fight to overcome ISIS forces in that country, but suggested that Britain may need make a bigger commitment, at least in Iraq and Syria, writing:

We are making progress in the fight against ISIS but it has to be eliminated with greater speed and vigor. This "caliphate" is itself a source of recruitment. We can use local allies in the fight, but they need equipment and where they need active, on-the-ground, military support from us, we should give it. The Americans are doing this now — at least to a degree and with effect. But to have allowed ISIS to become the largest militia in Libya right on Europe's doorstep is extraordinary. It has to be crushed.

In his article, Blair struck a middle ground between those who blame all Muslims for the actions of terrorist groups such as ISIS, and those who believe that the terrorists are but a tiny segment within Islam. He asserted that the threat to Britain was not limited to "tens of thousands of brainwashed crazies" but also to Muslims who did not advocate violence but nevertheless shared an ideology that was "fundamentally incompatible with the modern world"

"The adherents of this view of Islam are numbered in many millions," Blair continued. "This ideology is not interested in coexistence. It does not seek dialogue but dominance. It cannot therefore be contained. It has to be defeated."

Blair's article came just five days after ISIS claimed responsibility for the bombings that killed 34 people in Brussels on March 22 and he warned of further attacks if Britain fails to step up its fight against ISIS, stating:

The attacks in Belgium were shocking. Unfortunately the attacks are going to keep coming.

If you have no compunction about killing wholly innocent civilians and are prepared to die in the



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act of doing so, societies like ours offer vast possibilities of vulnerability.

Otherwise, we will have periodic but increasingly frequent acts of terrorism that will result in many more victims and start to destabilize our political and social cohesion.

Eventually the terrorists will commit an act of such size and horror that we will change our posture; but by then the battle will be much harder to win without measures that contradict our basic value system.

While appearing to take a reasonable “moderate” position between views that he ambiguously labeled as “right” and “left,” Blair also discounted the legitimate view expressed by noninterventionists such as former U.S. Representative Ron Paul (R-Texas) that Western policy bears some responsibility for destabilizing the Muslim world and fostering the rise of Islamic terrorism. Blair wrote:

We must escape from the paralyzing grip of the present political discourse stuck between a right wing that is now tipping into bigotry against Muslims as a whole and a left that thinks that calling it “Islamism” is stigmatic and prefers to believe that in any event we have caused all of this through western policy although the countries now affected cover the gamut of policy positions from the most interventionist to the expressly pacific.

This discourse disables the alliance we need within Islam.

Aside from the fact that Blair erred by asserting that only those on the Left believe that “we have caused all of this through western policy,” there is ample evidence to suggest that while Western policy may not have caused Islamic terrorism, it certainly contributed to it.

Speaking on NewsMaxTV’s Steve Malzberg Show in January 2015, Ron Paul — who was arguably the most outspoken noninterventionist member of Congress in recent years — made a case that the West’s overall foreign policy “invites retaliation.” He said:

And this is why we say if we had somebody do to us what we have done to so many countries in the Middle East, and how many people we’ve killed, and sending over drones, and bombing, being involved in all these wars, and supporting dictators one week, and taking away the support — and the stupidity of us sending all those weapons into Syria, ending up in the hands of ISIS — and right now we’re even sending more weapons! You know, because ISIS took all the American weapons. It’s that overall policy which invites retaliation, and they see us as intruders. But it’s a little bit more complex, you know, when they hit us, either here at home, and hit civilians, and what’s happening in France. But I don’t think you can divorce these instances from the overall foreign policy.

Blair’s assertion to the contrary, no one could reasonably claim that Paul is part of the political “Left.”

Britain, especially during the Blair years, was an enthusiastic partner in the intervention that destabilized Iraq and neighboring countries. It can reasonably be said that had not Saddam Hussein been removed from power by the U.S.-led invasion, and had not the United States aided the rebels trying to overthrow Bashar al-Assad in Syria, that ISIS would not have become the powerful threat that it is today. ISIS simply took possession the power vacuum resulting from the removal of one of these strong men and the attempted overthrow of the other.

Photo: Tony Blair

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