

## And Who Shall Guard The Guardians?

On Thursday 7 July, Islamist terrorists **murdered** over 50 Britons in a suicide bombing attack. The Metropolitan Police regard this as a terrible crime and are working to hunt down the people responsible.

However, the Metropolitan Police and the Association of Chief Police Officers are **funding** an Islamic academic called Tariq Ramadan to speak to the Middle Path conference in London on July 24 to the tune of £9000. So what will Mr Ramadan say?

Asked by one Italian magazine if the killing of civilians was morally right, he replied: "In Palestine, Iraq, Chechnya, there is a situation of oppression, repression and dictatorship. It is legitimate for Muslims to resist fascism that kills the innocent." Asked if car bombings were justified against US forces in Iraq, he answered: "Iraq was colonised by the Americans. Resistance against the army is just."

The Metropolitan Police Commissioner Sir Ian Blair said:

"Clearly this man has views about the struggle in Palestine and the struggles in Iraq which I find very difficult or offensive.

"(But) unless we hear these voices we are going to be in trouble..."

Sir Ian, and the other Mr Blair, do not seem to understand what they are doing. Mr Ramadan, who is barred from the United States for security reasons, is inciting violence against innocent people in Iraq, in Chechnya and in Israel. Incitement to violence is a criminal offence so Mr Ramadan is a criminal. Has he given convincing assurances he will not repeat those opinions again? If not, the Metropolitan Police and the Association of Chief Police Officers are knowingly sponsoring him to commit a crime, and have therefore also committed a crime.

But they think that they are going to be "in trouble" unless they commit it. What sort of trouble?

**Update:** A correspondent writes "He's not just inciting violence. He's inciting war." Indeed.

## Inciting war

That is exactly what Mr. Bush did with his WMD claims in Iraq.

by a reader on Sun, 07/17/2005 - 17:21 | [reply](#)

## Re: Inciting War

That can't be right. We have tremendous respect for the British armed forces, but we are sure that if Mr Bush had incited war against Britain, we would have lost by now.

by [Editor](#) on Sun, 07/17/2005 - 17:40 | [reply](#)

## And by saying so you admit

And by saying so you admit that only inciting war against Britain is a crime?

by a reader on Mon, 07/18/2005 - 13:09 | [reply](#)

## Re: And by saying so you admit

A reader wrote:

And by saying so you admit that only inciting war against Britain is a crime?

Inciting war against a free country is wrong. Saying that we will go to war with a tyrant or a terrorist organisation unless they surrender unconditionally is not.

by [Alan Forrester](#) on Tue, 07/19/2005 - 01:14 | [reply](#)

## Clarification

*Inciting war against a free country is wrong. Saying that we will go to war with a tyrant or a terrorist organisation unless they surrender unconditionally is not.*

I know Alan does not mean it is unconditionally the right decision to start a war no matter how bad a tactical move it is, however some readers may not, so it's worth pointing out.

Whether to go to war with, say, North Korea, is not an easy decision. It may be better for us to do it, or it may not, and honestly I don't have the information necessary to decide, because a lot of it is confidential. The principle Alan is referring to is simply that wars of defense (either our own defense, or the defense of innocent citizens of another country who want our help) are legitimate while wars of aggression (for instance, trying to impose one's will on a free democracy that poses no threat) are an entirely different matter.

Similarly, lending my tools to my neighbor is legitimate on principle,

but may not always be a good idea (for example, if he is careless).

-- Elliot Temple  
<http://www.curi.us/>

by **Elliot Temple** on Tue, 07/19/2005 - 02:03 | [reply](#)

## What about..

inciting war against a nation that commits torture or inciting war against a democratic nation that supports tyrannies in other countries? Is that OK?

by a reader on Tue, 07/19/2005 - 18:14 | [reply](#)

## countries

Country A has some bad policies, and some bad people, but its traditions try to correct these errors.

Country B has some bad policies, and some bad people, and has a tradition of trying to entrench badness and prevent improvements.

Would you agree countries A and B are totally different?

-- Elliot Temple  
<http://www.curi.us/>

by **Elliot Temple** on Tue, 07/19/2005 - 18:26 | [reply](#)

## Define:

Define: Traditions, as in culture (good?); a tradition, as in history of action (bad?)

"its traditions try to correct these errors."

by a reader on Wed, 07/20/2005 - 04:04 | [reply](#)

## It's "exactly what Mr. Bush did"

Cox & Forkum's **observation**.

by **Editor** on Wed, 07/20/2005 - 08:52 | [reply](#)

## Trouble

**The World** asks:

*What sort of trouble?*

in response to Sir Blair's comment:

*(But) unless we hear these voices we are going to be in trouble...*

I think Blair means that it is **useful to know what the ideas are**

**of evil people.** If we better understand them, then we can better protect ourselves from them. That's one of the reasons freedom of speech for evil people is important as well that for good people, though of course it's certainly debateable whether this freedom of speech should be extended to inciting violence.

**Henry Sturman**

by **Henry Sturman** on Sat, 07/23/2005 - 05:23 | [reply](#)

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