



'Direct threat': Mr Cameron

British jets join allies strike on IS forces today

By James Chapman, Jason Groves and Tamara Cohen

BRITISH war planes will today begin air strikes on Iraq amid a spiralling political row over whether they should also hit Islamic State fanatics in neighbouring Syria.

Six RAF Tornados are expected to join US, French and Arab air strikes – their first in Iraq for six years – after British ministers voted to go into a third Gulf War.

Warning that the fight to crush IS could last for years, not months, David Cameron told an emergency session of parliament that as well as murdering Western hostages with 'staggering brutality', the group was plotting terrorist attacks in Britain.

'This is about psychopathic terrorists trying to kill us,' the prime minister said.

'We do have to realise that whether we like it or not, they have already declared war on us.' MPs

'Isil needs to be destroyed'

authorised military action by 524 votes to 43, one of the biggest Commons majorities since the last general election. Last night Britain's Labour education spokesman Rushanara Ali was reported to have resigned. And defence spokesman Vernon Coaker was forced to sack aide Iain McKenzie for voting against strikes in Iraq.

Mr Cameron said that there was a 'strong case' for extending air strikes against IS, also known as Isil or Isis, from Iraq into Syria, where it has also seized vast areas. 'I am very clear: Isil needs to be destroyed in Syria as well as Iraq,' he said.

'We support the action that the US and five Arab states have taken in Syria.'

Mr Cameron even suggested he might be prepared to intervene in Syria without seeking a vote in Parliament if it would avert a 'humanitarian catastrophe' or there was an immediate threat to Britain. But he ruled out deploying British combat troops – though special forces are already operating in the region, and troops may be deployed to train regional forces acting on the ground.

Although Labour leader Ed Miliband backed action in Iraq, he prompted a backlash from both Conservative and Labour MPs by saying Britain would have to seek a United Nations resolution authorising any attacks on Syria.



ALLIES BOMB OILFIELDS

US-led coalition warplanes have destroyed four tanks belonging to the Islamic State (IS) group in eastern Syria during action in a key oil-producing area that has generated millions of dollars for the extremist faction.

The strikes outside the city of Deir el-Zour on the Euphrates River marked the second consecutive day that the US and its Arab allies have taken aim at the militants near the border with Iraq.

Coalition planes pounded a dozen makeshift oil-producing facilities in the same area on Thursday, trying to cripple one

of the militants' primary sources of cash – black market oil sales that the US says produce up to \$2million (€1.6million) a day.

The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said the American-led air campaign also hit the Tanak oil field as well as the Qouriyeh oil-producing area in Deir el-Zour yesterday. It added that air raids also targeted the headquarters of IS in a town south-east of Deir el-Zour city.

Activists added that the strikes caused an unknown number of casualties, and were believed to have been carried out by the coalition.

This effectively blocks the government from taking action because Russia has already pledged to veto any such resolution.

'In my view, when we are not talking about being invited in by a democratic state it would be better – I put it no higher than that – it would be better to seek a UN Security Council resolution,' he told the Commons.

However, his stance was criticised by some senior Labour figures because it effectively leaves the decision in the hands of Russia. Former minister Pat McFadden said: 'Why is it right to come to the aid of the victims of Isis who are living under a democracy in Iraq but not those who are living under a dictatorship in Syria?'

Former Labour defence secretary Lord Hutton said: 'My concern has been that we've almost closed down any sort of action in Syria, we've closed down any discussion

about support troops on the ground and I would much prefer those options to be kept open.'

Defence Secretary Michael Fallon suggested the Government might ask MPs to support extending air strikes into Syria.

'Isil is based in Syria, that's where its headquarters are, that's where

'War will take not months, but years'

its resources, its people are,' he said. 'To deal with Isil you do have to deal and defeat them in both Iraq and in Syria.'

Shadow foreign secretary Douglas Alexander later said that Labour would not insist on a UN resolution before considering action in Syria. He said: 'Our mind is not closed and we have not made a UN Security Council resolution a

condition of future action... Our moral compass is not set in Moscow or Beijing... we have said very clearly that there is a legal basis for action.'

Opening an often impassioned six-and-a-half hour debate, Mr Cameron warned IS posed a direct threat that could not be ignored.

'This is not a threat on the far side of the world,' he said.

'Left unchecked, we will face a terrorist caliphate on the shores of the Mediterranean, bordering a Nato member, with a declared and proven determination to attack our country and our people.'

Mr Cameron said the war against Isil would take 'not just months, but years', adding: 'The hallmarks of this campaign will be patience and persistence, not shock and awe.'

Some relatives of kidnapped British taxi driver Alan Henning, the latest hostage threatened with beheading by IS, have warned that air strikes could reduce their chances of ever seeing him again.

But foreign secretary Philip Hammond insisted the attacks would make little difference to the fate of Westerners held by IS.

Firebrand Muslim preacher Anjem Choudary and seven other men were released on bail last night after being questioned by counter terrorism detectives.

Choudary, 47, and ten other members of his inner circle were arrested in London and Rugby, Warwickshire, on suspicion of supporting banned extremist group al-Muhajiroun, which he co-founded almost 20 years ago.

His friend, Trevor Brooks, 39, now known as Abu Izzadeen, was charged with breaching a counter terrorism order by giving police false information.

He will appear before magistrates today.

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Doctors to be balloted on new consultant pay increase

By Petrina Vousden

DOCTORS are going to be balloted on pay proposals which would increase new consultant salaries to up to €175,000.

The pay proposals made by the Labour Relations Commission have been accepted by the HSE. However, the Irish Medical Organisation did not give its approval to the deal last month.

But it confirmed last night its consultant and junior doctor committee have decided to put the LRC proposals on new entrant consultant pay and career structures to a ballot of members.

The IMO said it was putting the deal to a ballot of members after it got assurances on aspects of the plan from the HSE. The proposals will lift their pay scale for new consultants of between €116,000 and €121,000 to between €127,000 and €175,000. The salary increases are being made in a bid to retain doctors and attract medics to Irish shores.

They follow a decision taken two years ago in which the Government unilaterally cut the pay of new hospital consultants by 30 per cent.

In a statement the IMO said: 'This current crisis in retaining and recruiting Irish trained doctors has been a direct result of the 30 per cent pay cut which was unilaterally imposed on new entrant consultants in 2012 and, while acknowledging that the proposals are an improvement on existing terms, the IMO calls on the Department of Health and the HSE to commit to ongoing reform to ensure that the Irish health system becomes an employer of choice for Irish doctors and an environment where they can practise safely and effectively.'

Health Minister Leo Varadkar urged doctors last month to accept the pay offer. He said: 'There are a large number of vacant consultant posts across the health service and this is impacting on waiting times and patient care. The proposals... will allow consultants to earn €175k at the top of their salary scale, which is comparable to salaries in other English-speaking countries and is a very good salary by anyone's reckoning.'

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Squatters to land in Dublin

SQUATTERS from around the world are in Dublin this weekend for what is being described by its organisers as an international squatters' convergence.

The exact location is being closely guarded and those hoping to attend have been instructed only to follow a series of 'squatter symbols' beginning in Smithfield on the city's Northside.

Talks will introduce topics such as squats in Paris, legal workshops, internet security and 'a critique of squatted social centres'. Yoga and music performances are also promised.

An organiser declined to speak to the Irish Daily Mail last night.

Squatters' rights can be obtained under Irish law but are subject to a challenging list of legal criteria and are more commonly encountered in rural settings involving land disputes between farmers.

Syndicate's €86.7m win third biggest in Lotto history

IRELAND'S latest EuroMillions millionaires picked up their cheque for €86.7million yesterday – the third biggest win in the history of the National Lottery.

The winners are a syndicate from Dublin and they wish to keep the win private. The winning ticket was a €6 Quick Pick.

Speaking at National Lottery offices today, the winners said: 'We're on top of the world.' This latest win brings the total amount won

By Eamon Donoghue

by EuroMillions players in Ireland to over €751million. That's 31 million cash prizes paid out in the country.

The National lottery added that 'Ireland is fast becoming one of the luckiest places in Europe to buy a EuroMillions ticket.'

'This is the fourth EuroMillions jackpot win for Ireland in just over a year.'

Last March, Staunton's Costcutter Express in Castlebar, Co. Mayo sold a €15million winning ticket.

In September 2013, a young man from the South East shared a jackpot of over €25.6million with a player in Spain, taking home €12.8million.

He purchased his lucky ticket in Ardkeen Superstores, Waterford. Meanwhile in June 2013, a lucky player scooped a €94million

jackpot.

That lucky ticket was purchased in Mace, Beaumont, Dublin 9.

The National Lottery explained that they will release the selling agent details at a later date.

Limerick woman Dolores McNamara continues to hold the record for the largest Irish EuroMillions win of over €115million in 2005.