

My intervention on the General Defence Debate

Sir John Redwood (Wokingham) (Con):

The Secretary of State is making a good case. Does he agree that, as this extra money is available, we should ensure that more of it is spent on procuring weapons and military requirements here in the United Kingdom, because we cannot be properly defended unless we can make our own military vehicles, our own steel and our own explosives? We are short of capacity.

Grant Shapps (Secretary of State for Defence):

I absolutely agree with my right hon. Friend. It is incredibly important that we develop—or, rather, further develop—our own domestic defence industrial base. That is one of the reasons why we have spoken about putting that industrial base on a war footing, and it is one of the reasons why—this is not, as has been suggested, some sort of cheap gibe—it is important that the Government, or indeed the Opposition if they want to be the Government, set out the path in order that that investment can take place. That base will not be able to invest unless it knows what is happening on a multi-year basis.