[The U.K. needs to look to its national security](#)

NATO were right. The Intelligence reports, shared widely with the public, pointed to a major invasion of Ukraine. Putin assembled the majority of his country's substantial military forces around the borders of Ukraine for a purpose. We had to await the ending of the winter Olympics and the interviewing of a succession of western leaders, presumably to reassure him that NATO would not go to war. Only now has Putin decided to set some aims for his violent mission. He says he wants Ukraine to change its government to become a neutral state that would effectively be a puppet of Russia. If he does not get his way easily he may well turn to complete conquest to enforce his will.

Putin has revealed the strategic weakness of the European position. Short of energy, reliant on Russian gas, the Europeans gave the Minsk Agreement and a possible new settlement their best efforts. It was in vain. Putin did not want to see Ukraine remodel its constitution as a single state looking towards the West. He ripped up what remained of Minsk by recognising the rebel states as independent countries.

The UK is right to work with our US and European allies in NATO to do the best we can in a grave situation. What this must now do is make the UK take some hard and good decisions about our future national security. It should start with a National Security Council review of our energy supply with a view to re establishing self sufficiency as soon as possible. It needs to include a further military review to expand our forces. We could spend the extra tax we collect on producing more of our own oil and gas to pay for a larger military. It needs further work on our cyber defences, on protecting our networks for utilities and better defence of core technologies and industrial competences. We have been too free with our best ideas, and too careless about keeping domestic production and intellectual property in core areas like steel, special metals, ceramics, electronic chips and the rest.