

Will the National Security Council wake up to the gas threat?

NATO wishes to deter Russia from invasion of Ukraine. It also wishes to avoid a major war between NATO and Russia, as President Biden has stated clearly. The response is to tell Russia that there would be a massive retaliation through a new level of tough sanctions damaging Russia's trade and economy were Russia to break her word and invade.

The West will arm and advise the military in Ukraine to resist any Russian incursion. The USA and UK have visibly sent arms to help Ukraine defend against the mobile armour, rockets and batteries of the Russian forces marshalled near Ukraine's borders.

The EU has not been present at the main talks and has been strangely silent on this big issue close to its borders. The German led grouping is very dependent on Russian gas to fuel its factories and homes as Russia is well aware. Russia, Germany and the EU are locked in debates about the Nord Stream 2 pipeline but they are close partners in gas supply already via Nord Stream 1 and various land pipes.

This compromises their ability to resist Russian aggression. The U.K. needs to understand that gas and energy generally is a crucial part of the power balance in Europe. The U.K. needs to pursue a path of energy independence to keep its strength, just as the USA has done. The USA produces more than enough gas for her own needs and has a gas price much lower than the European one as a result. Russia cannot bargain her gas for other advantages with the USA.

UK energy policy seems based on making us more and more import dependent for electricity, gas and coal on Europe. This is a grave weakening of our position which the National Security Council should correct immediately. Becoming import dependent on a Western Europe short of gas and all basic energy, with Germany closing her nuclear power stations and France struggling to keep her old stations in production is a very bad idea.

Policy should be redirected to allow production of more oil, gas and specialist coal in the UK. It is crucial strategically and it is also the greener option than importing the fossil fuel.