

**Richard Reeve MAW Remembrance Lecture 2019 given at Bloomsbury Baptist Church WC2H 8EP**

**on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2019 at 2pm**

**“Rethinking Security : How Britain can think globally and act peacefully”**

**Tim Devereux:** Good Afternoon everybody! I'm Tim Devereux, I'm chair of MAW. Welcome to the palatial Bloomsbury Baptist Church for MAW's 2019 Remembrance Lecture. Welcome to our speaker this afternoon, Richard Reeve. Richard has had 20 years' experience in Peace, Conflict and Security research, he's conducted research in over 30 countries in Africa, Europe and Asia with a long-term focus on West Africa and the Sahel/Sahara. He joined Oxford Research Group in 2013 and became its chief executive in 2018, and as of last Monday he's become the co-ordinator at Rethinking Security. He also has expertise in British, Foreign and Defence policy, including relations with the United States, NATO, the EU and the UN.

But he isn't always right! ORG published his paper “We need to talk about NATO” on 17<sup>th</sup> September 2015, and I'm quoting here, “Corbyn has just taken his place as the leader of the opposition, that is he leads the party in Westminster that has just lost the election. With fixed-term parliaments and the Conservative majority in the Commons, the next General Election is unlikely to arrive before 2020.” [Laughter] But usually he's spot on! He wrote in 2017, “The UK is moving to establish its strongest military presence in the Western Pacific since its 1971 withdrawal of forces from Singapore. (This will cheer you up.) Drivers include the quest for post-Brexit and arms supply deals. Rethinking Security says, Security matters to everyone. But much that government is doing in our name is making us all less safe. At home and around the world, it's time for a rethink. So I'm very pleased to invite Richard to give his talk, ““Rethinking Security : How Britain can think globally and act peacefully”.

**Richard Reeve:** Thank you very much Tim, and thank you very much to the Movement for the Abolition of War for having me today, and thank you all very much for coming. I hope you are all able to hear me? It's a cold and wet day. It is an honour to speak in such company, it's an honour to follow the tradition of your great speakers who you've had in this venue and others, who you've had addressing you for your Remembrance Lecture each year. As Tim says, I'm very new to Rethinking Security, I've been a member of the network for the last 4 years, but I've only taken over working within the organisation for 5 days now, so I'm going to speak in a personal capacity but I'm going to draw on Rethinking Security's analysis of exactly why it's time for a rethink of the UK's National Security, and to enter into another way of thinking about things, and how that can be done *practically, immediately, meaningfully*.

But I'm also going to draw on 6 years with the Oxford Research Group and working with many of the other organisations that make up the Rethinking Security Network. So I'm privileged to be intellectually standing on the shoulders of giants such as Paul Rogers, who has addressed you previously, of Diana Francis, one of your members, she was very active in founding Rethinking Security, my predecessor Celia McKeon, and Scilla Elworthy, who may be familiar to you, who I have worked closely with over the past few years, and whose thoughts have very much informed my own.

I'm going to draw a lot on a briefing that I wrote with Paul Rogers a year or so ago in which I *did* predict that there probably would be an election before 2022, - which wasn't terribly prescient: I think we've all known that this was coming for some time – it was called “Sustainable Security, Global Ideas for a Greater Britain”. So I'm going to be talking about not just National Security but Common Security, Human Security and Sustainable Security in its common sense. I hope you can all hear me and see me fine? We've already had Quakers and Catholics disagreeing slightly over whether I should use the altar or the lectern in a Baptist Church! I'm very aware that Baptists tend to have baptistries under their podium at the front, the one at my mother's Baptist church was a little bit wobbly so I'm hoping I'm standing on something like terra firma as I talk to you today!

That said, clearly in political terms we are not on terra firma, very far from it. When I was asked to give this lecture a few weeks ago, my immediate thought was, “31<sup>st</sup> October! Brexit Day. Brexit, Day 3. Will it be No-deal Brexit, will there be a last-minute deal? This of course will be what’s on everybody’s mind”. Well here we are, it didn’t happen this time, we’re all waiting to see what happens in 3 months’ time. But more importantly, we’re all thinking more about what happens in 5 or 6 weeks’ time because we’re in a General Election, well, *almost* in a General Election campaign. Royal Assent is given, we’re just waiting for Parliament to dissolve in the next few days.

That at least is a great opportunity. Punditry for better or worse has been talking about, “Is there going to be an election, is there not going to be an election?” because elections matter; because politicians in Westminster, the composition of our Government, matters about what informs our National Security Policy that the government pushes through. In theory, my job has been saying optimistically for the last 3 years “This is a great opportunity for change”. Obviously I keep saying that, and change doesn’t exactly happen the way we hoped it might, and I’ll talk a bit about how change has been happening in National Security Strategy in this country for better or worse, and how that’s been informed by changes in the context, changes in leadership in the country over the past 4 or 5 years. But an election does have the possibility of change, and what we’d expect to follow in this country would be what’s called a National Security Review process. Anyway we will achieve one in 2020 because it’s supposed to happen every 5 years and the last one was published in November 2015 six months after the first Cameron government took office, the non-coalition Cameron government that is.

I was looking through some features of the evolution of the strategic situation or the strategic mindset in this country over the last few years, and then thinking a bit about the key features, talking about what essentially, what they have been talking about for the last 4 or 5 years, which is largely *continuity*. This country has an imperial, national approach to security, which has been informed by 200 years or more of global Britain around the world, a particular mindset and narrative and idea of what Britain means to the world. It includes, in current terms, primacy of the United States as the world’s Superpower or Hyperpower, Britain having a global presence, and dependence not just on the use of, but in particular the supply of oil & hydrocarbons to the world, and the ability of the UK to strike militarily first, anywhere in the world, at a time of its choosing. Those are some of the integral features which are not even really mentioned, barely even mentioned, in a national strategy because they are so deep, if not in our national psyche, at least in the establishment or elite or “those who have a voice”’s take on security.

I’ll be talking about the evolution of the national security thinking under the recent governments, from what I call a “Prosperity agenda” under David Cameron, George Osborne, a “Global Britain agenda” in the Brexit context, very characteristic of Theresa May’s government until recently; and then thinking a bit about where this is going under Boris Johnson: we might think of it as “Britain First”, in parallel to the “America First” approach, perhaps we could think of it as “Britannia Unbound” – I feel those are words that the Prime Minister might use, think about it, the echoes of the past into the future exerting its presence. I’ll also be asking, What is Global Britain? Does Britain matter to the world? Should it matter to the world? And if it does, and actually I think it does, what could we be doing differently? And I’ll give you 10 ideas that I think are possible, practicable to take forward in the next government, the next parliament, to think very differently about national security.

So, a National Security Strategy Review, we have that every 5 years, ought to be the big opportunity for the nation to come together in a sense, to think about what security means, to think about what national security means, how our country relates to the rest of the world, because we’re not alone - we may be an island, but we’re not isolated, nor do I think do we want to be – and think about ourselves in a global context, not just national security.

Common security is very integral to the way Rethinking Security thinks about the world. I cannot have security, me myself, if you my neighbours are not at peace. We cannot be isolated. And some of the ways we think about “common security” as being different from national security are, well, security is a freedom to be enjoyed by all, not by one person in isolation; security is a common right, something that ethically, it appears not right to think about my security being at the expense of somebody else’s or indivisible from that. Thirdly we think about security as a long-term, patient practice. It’s not something we can simply establish simply by clicking our fingers or by doing one thing, it’s something that we have to work at, collectively, between ourselves, to make real, to make matter. And finally, as such, security is a shared responsibility.

So where are we now? The last national security strategy, or the “National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review” as it’s properly known, was pushed through in November 2015. I was one of a number of people in civil society who tried to impact on that process. At the time we were promised by the government that there would be opportunities to interact with the policy on it but they didn’t really do that, in the end they did a literally “answers on a postcard”, because you could write a maximum of 150 characters, which is the length of an old tweet – not words, characters – and you could do that on an on-line portal and send your thought for the national security – and that was the consultation process. So it was, not unsurprisingly and not without precedent, an elite process, in Whitehall and with one or two very trusted think-tanks or academic units closely affiliated with the Ministry of Defence in particular, a little bit of a revolving door possibly, and the way that the National Security Strategy organised its thoughts about security was 3 priorities, and there was a very nice alliteration:

1. Protect Our People. Not too surprising. More surprising is the second one. The second is:
2. Project Our Global Influence. So, be powerful. Thirdly:
3. Promote Our Prosperity. So, no security without economic growth, British prosperity.

Under those, some of the headlines were: “Protect Our People” – a lot of that was around having more globally deployable expeditionary strike capability, so ability to exert harm far from home, not threaten harm as deterrence, in the words of the strategy. Second “Project Our Global Influence” – a lot of that was around our alliance structure, and some of that was very traditional, there was NATO, United States, Europe to an extent (this of course was before Brexit) but also many of those who didn’t share our values necessarily, so there’s a lot in there about Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States, for example, and those we have a close security alliance with on various terms; and then in terms of “Promoting Our Prosperity” – a lot of that was about the government’s role in promoting UK companies. It doesn’t really matter what companies they are, they might be oil companies, they might be tech companies, certainly there’s a section about them being arms exporting companies and support for that. Not very much about promoting people abroad necessarily, but a lot about business, and that was something rather new, and I actually think George Osborne, the then chancellor, was the determinant personality in the last national security strategy.

It encompasses more broadly than that, a rather unreflective narrative about British Security that goes way back, and I think in a way you could summarise that National Security Strategy in 3 words which we weren’t using very much at that time, but they would be “Strong and Stable”. The idea that the world is a better place for Britain being strong. It makes an assumption about the UK being a benign force for good in the world. We’re not alone in this, but we are I think a little bit more advanced in our thoughts on this than most countries as being synonymous with global peace and order. We created the international system, and you could say in our own image, and we need to uphold that for the world to be a peaceful, stable place. But doing that of course it prioritises UK national security over the security of people in other parts of the world. That’s what a national security strategy – any national security strategy - is going to prioritise the nation and is therefore going to be problematic in some terms for doing that. But it advances national interests, which are very much determined by those in power.

Of course we don't have a meaningful dialogue about what our national interests are. To some extent that's happened as a result of the Brexit process or lack of process over the past 3 years. We have begun to think more broadly about what Britain means in the world, where our interests lie. The strategy is very much determined by those in power, those in office, those in Whitehall, those with lobbying power who talk to those in power, and that's a very short-term outlook as all previous national security strategies have in terms of focussing on immediate physical or military threats, and of course the military have to think what they might be.

There's usually a 1% threshold in military strategy: if there's a 1% possibility that something will happen, then you have a duty to prepare against it. We don't apply that in other contexts, we think about things as a 50% or a 30% probability before we put the resources into them. That's not quite what happens in national security. It's responsive. It's a bit better than previous national security strategies about putting some effort into prevention strategies, and yes, it thinks more broadly than just military power, but primarily it's about being able to respond with military force to threats. And the response is to dominate and control. It's worked for us in the past, we say, why not the future? We are what we are because of being a powerful, projective force in the world.

And of course it doesn't actually define what security, not just national security, is. What is security? What does it mean? There is a definition of security that comes through from this and other national security strategies: really it's synonymous with "stability" in the sense of the status quo, "business as usual". It's a strategy for ensuring business as usual. Now if we think that business as usual is fine or the best-case scenario then we're OK, we're doing our best to preserve the best in the world. If not, then we need to think about something different.

So, why does this narrative come into play? What are some of the underlyings of it? Why don't we think about security more broadly?

1. Firstly, because of the dominance of certain voices in the conversation around security, the social elite if you will.
2. Secondly, disproportionate influence of business in policy making. That includes hydrocarbons, the oil industries, perhaps the most resource-rich industry; it certainly includes the arms industries: it's not a coincidence that whenever you leave Whitehall or Westminster to go into the Westminster tube station, the advert you see at the top of the escalator is for BAE systems. It doesn't change – the advert changes but it's always BAE systems, nobody else advertises there, and that's not a coincidence. They effectively have one customer, and it's there, and it's a very powerful customer, and the voice is bought.
3. Thirdly of course there's tremendous inertia in institutions about doing change. I was talking with somebody earlier about what's possible or what can be done, what is done: the danger is we look at things as they are and say this is what can be done: what can be done is what has been done. We have to push the envelope on that. We don't want to be in the iron cage of what *is* done as we so often are, and the media is in this cage about what can be done.
4. Fourthly I think a lot of the values that underpin national security policy-making are what we might call "Hegemonic Masculinity", a very male approach to fighting problems, reducing discourse to threats and coercive responses. Often we men in particular are not very good at getting down from the symptoms into the causes, stepping back. We don't understand the psychology- this isn't always a male thing, but it can often be - we don't understand the psychology of our own insecurity, and that's so important in decision-making.
5. And finally and most importantly, the discourse of our national security in Whitehall when they are making decisions is very abstract, or abstracted from its real-life impacts. Which is curious. There's

no nation has gone more out into the world and engaged with it in various ways – certainly no country has invaded as many countries as this country, occupied them, probably lent money to them and many other kinds of engagement as well, but we don't think about the way these policies impact people in Yemen, or Bahrain, or Sudan, or Iraq. That's not the challenge that's posed. The challenge is "How is this going to affect our country?" I'll give an example. In a different context, we have a new thing from this security strategy, called the "conflict security instability fund", reasonably large, it's about £1.3 billion a year, it's in theory spent on peace-building or peace-making, but the money is allocated according to what they call the theories of change devised by the National Security Council for about 40 or 45 countries or regions in the world. It's not about what the money can do to improve the lot of people in, let's say Sudan, it's about "How can British money be spent in or on Sudan to improve UK national security?" So in this context, for example, it might mean stopping migration out of Sudan into the Mediterranean, European Union, the UK. It might be it's better to have the devil we know, in this context authoritarian governments, rather than a brotherhood government like they had in Egypt for a while, or civil war if we think that's the outcome that transition will have. So we don't think about the impact for the locals, we think about strategy as impacting on the UK and us.

So that's where we are. Now, I posed the question, "Global Britain" – it's one of the words in my title for this speech – "what is it?" Firstly I rest on the assumption that Britain is global and that it matters. A lot of critics have sneered at this and said, "Britain is not a global power, it's at best a middle-ranking power, we're deluding ourselves." I think the truth lies somewhere in between, and I'll explain why, and give some figures:

- Firstly, Yes, we are, in seeming perpetuity, a permanent member of the UN security council, we're one of 5 states, who always have the veto, always have a voice in the UN security council. We talk about change but I don't think it's very likely to happen, often for reasons other than our own. We have that status.
- We are, if you look at GDP, economic output, in hard dollar terms, so what we can buy in dollars, we are the 5<sup>th</sup> biggest economy, we *were* the 5<sup>th</sup> biggest economy last year, possibly we have been overtaken by India this year, maybe we're the 6<sup>th</sup>, maybe the 7<sup>th</sup> because we're about the same as France, but we're up there, although if you adjust that by what's called purchasing power or parity, which means what you actually produce rather than what you can see it for, we're the 9<sup>th</sup> biggest economy because Brazil, Indonesia and India and somebody else overtake us.
- We have the fourth-largest volume of trade in the world, according to the World Trade Organisation, and at least according to one ranker, we have the greatest soft-power influence in the world - define that how you will, BBC World Service, British pop music, brand appeal, whatever. We are fairly consistently top 10 in a lot of these rankings. Now there's a question of what that means in real terms, because you put the numbers on them, and actually, we might be the fifth-biggest world economy, but we're only about 3% of output, so we're barely a 10<sup>th</sup> of what the US is, or China for example, with 5% of global trade. Yes, the top 5 or top 10 of many of these things, but quite a small percentage of these things. But more importantly for the conversation around national security, or global security, global insecurity, we have very global roles and responsibilities.
- We are probably the 6<sup>th</sup> largest military spender in the world, again about 3% of global total; we're the 6<sup>th</sup> largest arms exporter, according to Stockholm International Peace Research Unit data, something higher according to how you measure the output over the last 5 years, maybe 4% of the global arms trade; we also have the 5<sup>th</sup> largest stockpile of nuclear weapons in the world, and that gives us, rather rare in the world, a capability to destroy the world. We have an existential capacity that 182 (I think) other countries do not have, or rather more than that because no-one has quite enough nukes to end civilisation as we know it – we do: we know how to do it, we have those things,

we actually have them in Donald Trump's words, "locked and loaded", literally locked and loaded because they are targetted at certain places to do that. Whatever you think about nuclear weapons, that's a big responsibility.

- We also of course have a legacy of industrialisation that means that maybe we only produce about 1.2% of the world's greenhouse gases currently, that's the figure I could find, but what's up there warming the planet is something rather bigger, a particular responsibility from those early industrialisers.
- We of course also have a global footprint, shall we say culturally, politically and governmentally because of our role as an imperial power, the commonwealth, and our economic role around the world, with all the legacies and consequences of that. So we didn't get where we are today, either by accident or entirely benignly, I would say.

There is also a reality in global Britain that we need not overlook, which is that this country, with only one other parallel, is genuinely a global territorial mass. We may have decolonised almost everything, but Britain still has territory in pretty much every ocean in the world. In the Mediterranean we have Gibraltar, the Cyprus bases, in the Caribbean we have 4 or 5 territories, we have Bermuda just outside the Caribbean, South Atlantic, the Falklands, centring on Ascension Island; in the Indian Ocean we have Diego Garcia, a British International territory, and in the Pacific, we have Pitcairn which has 49 people. I'm not sure that's entirely by accident either. Of course most of these territories would be very hard to decolonise, given the small populations, but often I have the feeling that we deliberately kept a little piece of Britain, British land, everywhere so that we *can* talk about Britain being global. And only France has that ability also.

We are also rather unusual in that global presence in that quite a lot of those territories and rocks and flagpoles are exclusively and deliberately military bases. Even in France this doesn't apply. We have at least 3 of those territories which only exist as military bases: so we have the sovereign base areas in Cyprus, separated from Cyprus at independence in 1960. It's not us occupying Cyprus as a country, this is land alienated from Cyprus to us specifically to be a military base. We have the British International territories, depopulated in the '60s to make into a US/British airbase; and we have Ascension Island, between Africa and Brazil, also an airbase and listening post.

So we do have a global presence, and we do use it for particular purposes, and if we think about global Britain as this idea that has been expounded in some way since the Brexit vote in particular, since Theresa May's government, including by her then foreign minister, Boris Johnson, here are some of the big ideas:

**"Forward deployment"** which means military basing further afield, so we already had minesweepers and some other vessels in the Persian Gulf and now a frigate permanently there. We're planning to do the same in Singapore for the first time since 1971 – we used to have an East India, an East-Asia fleet before then, we're looking to re-establish that with one frigate in the future, and there's talk about having a permanent military base in the Caribbean as well.

**The global strike idea** which was put forward in 2015, a defence policy that has been taken forward for what they call "Carrier strike groups", aircraft carriers, and we're just about to commission the 2<sup>nd</sup> of our carriers to "fly the flag" as it were, anywhere in the world. We're restructuring the army around "strike brigades" for the same purpose on land, to be able to strike almost anywhere at a time of our choosing;

and you might call it a **"Greater Britain Pro-prosperity Sphere"** in Asia with the defence and the military industries taking the lead role. So it's no coincidence that Theresa May was visiting so many countries in East Asia during her period in office, Japan and Korea, India and others. Deals were done with Turkey to

create this new, next-generation fighter aircraft. We redoubled our aims to sell new aircraft and missiles to Saudi Arabia and Qatar in the Gulf, and a spat between them has played off rather well for BAE systems and others, because neither of them wants to be entirely outside; and there has been a big pitch in the Indo-Pacific, South and East Asia, whether that's selling designs for aircraft carriers to India; and whether that's called defence diplomacy with Japan and Korea, the Royal Navy resumed an almost permanent presence in the Pacific Ocean in 2018 after about 8 or 9 years of not being there; and generally following through with a sort of "pivot to Asia", following the American example. That could mean pivoting in various directions, but that's been one of them.

I find it particularly worrying, not just for the UK, but the world. On several occasions in the last year or so I've spoken off the record with American generals and their position has been, not "if" there is a war between US and China, but "when" there is war between US and China. That is the outcome they expect, and I think they also expect the UK to be part of any conflicts if or when it does happen. It isn't being talked about, really, in UK policy circles, it's not there in the Security Strategy and I very much doubt that it will be in the next one, but these are some of the directions we are being dragged in.

That said, I could call that the pessimistic view, but honestly I think that's a realistic view of where we are up to now, but I'm not without hope. Because the election is both an opportunity for radical change and an opportunity to talk about new policies, changing our thinking. In many ways, there *has* been a change in British security thinking over the past few years, and I've written about this with Oxford Research Group over the last couple of years. There hasn't been a change of thinking in the government, but there has in Parliament and the parties. I've looked at the manifestos for the last election, I haven't seen the ones for this election yet, and there was a shift in some quite important ways. Not everything, most of them were cagey about it; it's worth saying that Security or Defence rarely are issues that energise the population in election campaigns, few elections are won or lost on these things. But I think there are some very important things, some directions it could be going. So this hopefully is more optimistic. This is some of the possible. And I'm rooting this in what I think is relatively pragmatic in our current context, because it's going to take us a long time to shift away from where we are currently.

As an aside, and thinking on the church theme, as many of you know, there was a service in Westminster Abbey earlier this year to commemorate 50 years of continuous at-sea deterrence, the nuclear missile patrols - I suspect some of you were outside the cathedral and none of you were inside. I thought that was rather shocking, but then I remembered last time I went to Westminster Abbey, it's written there on the walls, our national culture, you only had to step in the door to see the flags and the glorious dead. There's very little of our national history you will find in Westminster Abbey that wasn't achieved through war. I suspect you won't find the Tolpuddle Martyrs in there, but you will find the Boer War, or many other campaigns which we've forgotten about, written in stone there. And because it's written in stone, in the national consciousness, in the national monuments, it will take a long time to change.

But some ideas starting with National Security: I'll give you 10 ideas and see what you think.

**Firstly the National Security Strategy**, OK we're unlikely to talk about a common Security Strategy at this point, we're going to talk about the nation. But if it's about the nation let's bring in the nation, and let's talk about what our national interests are. Let's have it as an opportunity for dialogue and discourse about what security means. All of government and all of society, as far as we can. We need to take people more seriously than multi-national companies, and it needs to be a document that isn't just about reacting to things, but it's first and foremost about being pro-active, about preventing conflict, and that can only start with a recognition about what role this country actually plays in global conflicts, and that needs to stem,

follow from challenging our view of ourselves as benign, a force for good in the world. Part and parcel of that need to be not just military threats, but climate breakdown as a threat, inequality and marginalisation as huge threats, and I'll come onto those.

**Secondly, there's a phrase that recurs in talk about the last National Security Strategy and our role in the world, which particularly came to the fore in 2016/2017, talking about the UK's role as an upholder of the International Rules-based Order.** It sounds good. It's particularly used in talking about the South China Sea and the Chinese grab for islands there. Yes, international law is important, but we need to be credible on that, which means not being selective about what we want to uphold, whether that's taking seriously the International Court of Justice's ruling on returning Diego Garcia to Mauritius, or whether that's obeying the laws of war, or the UN Charter. Because there are things we can do on our own, and every nation has to do things on their own, to set an example, but it's only really likely to have an impact (because let's not forget we have that 3%, 4% of influence in the world) if we work multilaterally. We need to get serious about the UN, multi-lateralism, and genuine rules-based order, because that's our best prospect of avoiding and abolishing war, and in many ways this charter document sets out what's supposed to happen. The challenge is to implement it, and we're getting further and further away from that. The US is a big influence on that but it's not the be-all and end-all. If we're going to be a P5 member of the security council, we've got to act responsibly. And there are a whole other panoply of instruments we ought to be serious about, whether that's the sustainable development goals, (the UK has been pretty good on leading on these), the arms trade treaty, which we've probably been more rhetorically significant on than practically, or various arms control or other charters that we take seriously.

**Thirdly, and I'm not sure third does this justice, but we need to get serious about climate breakdown,** and I think you were talking about this this morning, those of you who were at the AGM. We need to recognise climate change, climate breakdown, as in its way as much of an existential threat to the world as nuclear weapons. These are two big ones. It's a threat that's actually happening, we can see happening, and we are doing something to avoid. Now Britain has in some ways set leadership on climate and climate finance, but it has so far to go. So much to do at home, so much to do abroad: there's so much we could be doing with our development aid, assistance to help newly-industrialising countries do so in a green way. And if you want to push the economy, why think about arms sales when you could be thinking about batteries, clean energy, bio-tech?

**Fourth, we need to think about how we can enhance our aid and development spending.** Now I very much doubt any of the parties will be going into this election arguing for more than 0.7% of the national income, which we're committed to. At this point probably holding to that commitment is important, and that means holding to that as development assistance, not funding peace-keeping out of that money, not funding counter-terrorism strategies out of that money, not funding "security assistance" from that money. But as important as that numerical target, is how we spend the money, and yeah, the UK's done OK in terms of targeting states, Britain's been pretty good on "conflict sensitivity" as it's called, at not stoking conflicts through spending development money, but there's a lot more to be done.

**Fifth, time to bring in the Foreign Office.** The three levers of foreign security policy would be the Ministry of Defence, the Foreign Office and the Departments of International Development and International Security - Ministries, national ministries rather. We need to invest in diplomacy for peace, call it preventive diplomacy, call it mediation capabilities, and actually the Foreign Office has been run down in the last decade. It's crazy often to think there are British military missions in countries that have no embassy in the UK. The cost is tiny compared to what we spend on other levers of power. We could be following, for example, the Norwegian precedent in terms of investing in mediation capabilities, investing in peacebuilding, investing in training in peace & mediation, rather than as salespeople for certain industries or security actors.

**Sixth. There's a lot more we could be doing about peace operations, peace-keeping, the UN.** We've gone some distance towards stepping up to UN peacekeeping operations in the last 3 or 4 years, and credit to the recent governments on that. We have gone from offering almost nothing in terms of troop commitments to matching where our European peers, France, or Germany or Italy, are, for example, but that's still a tiny fragment of the military mission, and if there was something particularly useful that could be done, I think assisting the UN with its mandate on that is useful. That's not just a case of funding which we do, committing troops to assist with that, but also in terms of rethinking policy and practice at the UN, or protecting civilians, safeguarding peoples, making it fit particularly with political strategies - peacekeeping must be not there just as a plaster, it has to be part of something political, to end conflict and move it on.

**Seventh. Very clearly, and there was movement on this in the last election from many parties, we need to reset arms export policy.** We can't go on contradicting other aims of policy by sending billions of arms, missiles, aircraft to Saudi Arabia or other repressive governments, or frankly not just those that have a repressive internal record, but those that use force repressively, illegally, abroad, and that might include us! Of course we don't actually export to ourselves, but our biggest market is probably actually the US, or one of our bigger markets, outside the Gulf States – and Turkey. We recently banned new arms exports to Turkey in response to their intervention in Syria. We didn't ban the existing contracts – so the £100 million contract that BAE systems has for developing the next generation of H fighter – that's fine. They won't use that in Syria, will they?! So we're coming out of the European position and the common European position on arms sales, and we need to have something at least as good to focus on and guide us, not just guide us, curtail us in the future, but also to hold to that, because frankly we haven't held to the policies we've had in the past. But more than that, we need to tackle the influence of, if you will, the military-industrial complex, and that's not just about whether cigarettes or BAE Systems can advertise on the escalators of Westminster Tube station. It's about the influence they have, in government, the revolving door between MoD civilians, senior officers, industry, politicians, and for example whether it's right that we have a private company that is your sole provider of frigates, submarines, essentials. And that companies have self-interest, they have shareholders, and I see those interests as being rather difficult to tackle through voluntary measures. So we're probably going to have to get serious about nationalisation, defence diversification, as ways to shift the outputs of those industries, or their interests. It's a huge knot at the centre of decision-making that has to be unpicked if we are actually to think about national security, common security, as something different from the interests of the shareholders of certain organisations and those who aspire to work for them.

**Eighth, we probably need to talk about military spending.** I don't expect any of the parties to do this in this campaign. The 2% military spending thing has become rather totemic for so many. Even if they don't believe in it, I don't believe they are going to argue against it in this election. One reason why that's not necessarily a bad thing, is it's probably going to take that much expenditure to turn things around in at least the next parliament. You can make big changes, but big changes cost money. In the longer term, yes, we seriously need to think about how much we spend, because the UK spends at least 50% more as a percentage of its economy on the military than the European average, and we spend that because we're "global Britain", because we believe we need nuclear weapons, because we believe we need global power projection, because we believe we have to protect our territories in the South Atlantic, in the Indian Ocean, in the Caribbean, even the Pacific. Once we rethink that, we can think about bringing it back in. Now harmonisation with other European states is one way of doing that, and maybe we should be thinking about 2% as a maximum rather than a minimum, as NATO stipulates it, maybe there's something for leadership there, in terms of what liberal democracy means.

**Ninth, and apologies if I've taken so long to talk about it, but there's plenty we could be doing in terms of weapons of mass destruction and disarmament.** Again, I don't expect any of the major parties in this election to be arguing for nuclear disarmament in the UK. I don't even expect them to be arguing against

spending £41 billion on Trident. But there are many steps we can take in that direction, and whether that is moving initially on the posture on nuclear weapons, so for example moving away from deploying these things on submarines; whether it's changing the first use policy that NATO has, or withdrawing from that, moving to what I call a recessed capability – all kinds of ways we could be stepping down the nuclear ladder. And of course we need to have the conversation, because we haven't been having it for a while, we're not where we were in the national conversation in the 50's or 60's on nuclear weapons, but it's a conversation we need to have, as with the European Union, from our polarised state. Now, the polls, not the political poles but the opinion polls, show not just the provision of nuclear weapons in terms of public attitudes, a lot of "don't knows", but not what's represented by the manifestos of the political parties in the recent elections. So again we need to bring that into the national conversation about security, what it means, because the parties aren't representative of what the people believe is the right way forward. And there are other areas in weapons of mass destruction that the UK could be also leading. We have a particular role as a pen-holder on the Biological weapons Convention, and an important role on the Chemical Weapons Convention, and there are a lot of technological changes which I don't necessarily understand myself, but I'm going to allude to them – our enforcement of these weapons – we've largely written these off as things we made illegal in the 70's and 80's. Clearly that's not the case, they've come back into use in various forms in the last 5 years, 6 years. New kinds of chemicals are being developed, and more importantly, new kinds of biological toxins are being developed, and gene-editing, I'm told, is a terrible Pandora's box in terms of what can be achieved in Biological Weapons, and it's something that the UK could be doing more of to keep those under control.

**Finally, tenth, very importantly the UK needs to see a big sea-change in terms of its migration policy.**

We've been extremely unwelcoming to migrants, whether they are forced migrants, refugees, asylum seekers, trying to come to this country. We've only taken very few compared to our population and wealth, and that ought to be a source of national shame – we could do so much more. But also, we're being quite restrictive in terms of other economic migrants, and we've been deliberately pursuing a hostile environment for those that come here in good faith, contributing much to our country. This needs to be turned around. So we need to stop securitising migration, penalising people for trying to find a better life in the country.

And that brings us back really to where I think I want to be in the National Security Strategy, a national strategy for a global country that does matter to the world, that needs to matter, because the interests of the world are not divergent from the interests of this country, and the actions of this country have huge impacts on the world.

Whether or not we're a global power, we certainly have a global impact. The next National Security Strategy needs to bring that back home in thinking about a common security approach, and not so much what the world can do for us, but what we can do for the world: because when the world is a happier, yes, more prosperous and more peaceful place, so is the UK, and that, I hope, is where a global Britain will be in the future. Thank you.

Richard Reeve 2.11.2019