

Ministers should insist on a revision of aims for government

In this civil service led government the aims are to preserve the EU legal framework, promote net zero in all things, keep obedient and good relations with all international bodies, allow quangos to take most of the decisions and bind U.K. defence, resilience and economic activity into the European model.

Some Ministers welcome this. The Treasury runs on rephrased Maastricht rules and pays up for all the bills to the EU and foreign governments and bodies without ever pushing back on them. The Business department until the recent Ministerial led change of energy policy got on with running down U.K. industry and energy to cut domestic CO₂ only to import more. The defence department joined many procurement and deployment systems with allies leaving the U.K. unable to arm herself easily in case of need.

We now need a reset for the new world we face. The USA, the EU, China and other important players are promoting more self sufficiency and less reliance on imports. The world is splitting into two large informal blocs, a democratic state one led by the USA and an autocratic one led by China. In this world the U.K. needs to follow policies which strengthen our national resilience and draws us closer to allies we can trust. The 5 Eyes grouping is central to our future, just as NATO is crucial to our defence.

The U.K. needs a strategy to ensure we have all the technologies and capabilities we need to feed ourselves, to defend ourselves and to keep the lights on. The policy of binding our energy system into an EU one when the continent is chronically short of oil and gas was a bad idea. The growth of dependence on continental food was short sighted. The shedding of core industrial activities like steel making, ceramics and aluminium was unwise.

The new national security policy has to be based on the perception that we need to do more for ourselves. The Ukraine war should be a wake up call to how vulnerable the European continent is if it loses access to Russian gas and Ukrainian food.