

III. International

Global Britain: The ‘Fusion’ of Military-Civilian, Foreign-Domestic, War-Peace

The following is an edited transcript of a presentation by Mike Robinson, editor of the UK Column, in the Saturday, September 18 web-cast of The LaRouche Organization, moderated by Dennis Speed. The entire program is available [here](#).

Dennis Speed: You are watching The LaRouche Organization web-cast called, “Government Requires a Concept of the Future; Why the LaRouche Solution for Afghanistan, Not ‘Global Britain,’ Will Restore Reason in East-West Relations.”

Now, we don’t believe in leaving people with terms like “Global Britain” that they don’t know anything about, as something simply mouthed by someone like a Tony Blair. We want to have an actual concept of where this comes from, what the idea is. Is it merely good old-fashioned British imperialism? Is it something different?

So, we decided to go to Mike Robinson, editor of *UK Column* in Plymouth, UK, to see what he can tell us about this. Mike has been following this, and has been aware of this for quite some time. We’re happy to have you with us, and now’s your time to wax eloquent.



Mike Robinson

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Mike Robinson: Thanks for having me. I’ll be making a number of points.

Interdependence

The first point is this concept of interdependence, which we have seen right through the defence policy in the UK, in the European Union, and trans-Atlantic as well. I want to try to put this policy into a bit of context. This is what the graphic that the President of the United States released, said:

The UK, the United States, and Australia have signed a landmark



ARGUMENT

An expert's point of view on a current event.

Britain's Special Relationship Fantasy Has Been Exposed

For years, London convinced itself it was Washington's close partner. That's now impossible to believe.

By Ian Buruma, a professor of democracy, human rights, and journalism at Bard College.

defence and security partnership, AUKUS (Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States), that will defend our shared interests around the world.

The first question you then ask is, who or what is referred to by “our shared interests”? It doesn't define that. Is it governments, or is it something beyond governments? In the launch of AUKUS, Prime Minister Boris Johnson reiterated this “security and stability” policy—a phrase he has used often. His entire presentation at the launch was a bit of a surprise, because Britain's “special relationship” with the U.S. is supposed to be a fantasy, after the U.S. “betrayed” us [Britain] by withdrawing from Afghanistan in the way they did, according to *Foreign Policy* magazine and many others.

So, what happened in the last few weeks?

Was the special relationship blown apart by the Afghan withdrawal or not? Clearly not. But not to be caught short in any way, the European Union used the momentum built up with respect to the French disappointment over this deal to try to push forward more momentum for their European “Defence Union.” So Ursula von der Leyen, the President of the European Commission, went straight to the European Parliament the day that AUKUS was announced, and lobbied once again for momentum to be pushed back into a Euro-

pean-level defence capability. And we'll talk a bit about that.

In 2018, the European Commission published a briefing document called “Joining Forces—The Way Towards the European Defence Union,” talking about this European Defence Union, and what the structure of that would be. I'll tie this together, as to how these two areas fit together, in a second. But the key point here is, they published a diagram in this document which gave some structure to how the defence union would be, and they talked

about pillars. “Security needs have to be addressed across all pillars of the Defence Union.” This is at the European level. “No pillar alone will be able to deliver on the ambitious goals...” NATO is very much considered to be one of the pillars of the Defence Union, but bilateral and multilateral cooperation amongst member states are the core—it's all about integration.

About the same time that this document was published, the Defence Secretary in the United Kingdom at that time, Gavin Williamson, was saying we have delivered European security long before the creation of either the European Union or NATO, and we'll continue to deliver it when we leave the European Union. With the signing of the UK-Germany joint vision statement in 2018, it was obvious to both countries that there's much more to achieve as two nations.

But it's not just Germany, because the UK and France began this process in 2010 with the Lancaster House Treaties, a 50-year defence pact, which was reinforced in 2018 with the Sandhurst Treaties. Then, there's a French-German similar treaty known as the Aachen Treaty, and we have a joint vision statement with Germany. Britain is at the center of a whole raft of these types of bilateral or multilateral agreements. So, if we just remind ourselves what that European Commission document said, all pillars are necessary, and that is a very key part of it.

So, what about the United States?

“Europe's top security needs have to be addressed **across all pillars of the Defence Union** ... **No pillar alone will be able to deliver** on the ambitious goals of enhanced strategic autonomy and more integrated defence cooperation as Europe's new normal.”



No. 10 Downing Street/Pippa Fowles

UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson.

I think it was four days before Donald Trump left office, Mike Pompeo announced that the United States was welcoming the European Union's guidelines for the third state participation and structured cooperation projects. This is the European Defence Union that he's talking about; this is one of those pillars. So, he was announcing that the U.S. would begin to participate at EU level, and this would strengthen EU-NATO cooperation as well. And very important, interoperability, as he called it; interdependence might be another word. "We look forward to completing an administrative arrangement with the European Defence Agency to ensure broad U.S. participation of PESCO (Permanent Structured Cooperation)," he said. That policy, the military integration of most of the EU countries, launched in 2017, did not change when Biden entered office; it continued as if nothing had changed.

So, we've got bilateral, multilateral agreements between the UK and various European countries, between the UK and the United States and Australia now. But there are others as well. There are European-level defence structures being built, aimed at interdependence. No nation can operate on its own—both military and the civilian interdependence.

A Centralized Civil, Military, and Industry Command

Ursula von der Leyen, when she was campaigning to become President of the European Commission in



USAF/Jette Carr

Former UK Secretary of State for Defence, Gavin Williamson.

July 2019, gave a presentation to the European Parliament in order to try and get the job. I just want to play a little bit of video here; just have a listen to this.

Ursula von der Leyen: [video] Now, I'm going to jump right forward to the present day. I'd like to talk about four different components which we introduced back then, which I believe are the important structural elements for setting up a European Defence Union.



First of all, just two or three weeks ago, for the first time we were able to give the go-ahead for a European command capacity in Brussels. That's the first time that *civil and military instruments would actually be commanded together* [emphasis added], where these commands would come from one single, central command office. That's an essential step forward. It was unthinkable a short while ago, but it is precisely the right approach to have if we want a European flavor to our defence policy.

Robinson: The key point she was making was that for the first time, they had a centralized command and control structure, which not only dealt with military command and control, but civilian command and control as well. And you'll see why that's important in a second. But in that same presentation, she went on to talk about the defence industry, and that it was pointless, for example, for multiple countries in the European Union to be manufacturing tanks or aircraft and so on. So, they were going to be looking at consolidation with the industry, and perhaps Germany might become the manufacturing base for tanks, and Sweden for aircraft, or France for whatever it happens to be. That isn't settled yet, but this would be the aim; consolidation in industry as well as operationally. So, you have interdependence in terms of operational military activities, but



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Mark Carleton-Smith, Chief of the General Staff of the British Army.

defence review that was due to be released, they began calling the “Integrated Defence Review,” because, as I say, this is all about integration and interdependency. So this is what the Integrated Defence Review says:

The Integrated Defence Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy will define the Government’s vision for the UK’s role in the world over the next decade.

The full text of the Integrated Defence Review is available [here](#).

So, this is key to what the UK considers that it’s going to be doing over the next decade.

But the question is, where is this policy coming from?

Is it coming from the Ministry of Defence, the British government? Or, is it coming from, for example, the Rand Corporation? This is a document called “The Utility of Military Force and Public Understanding in Today’s Britain,” and it was authored by one of the advisors to the Ministry of Defence. The full text of the Rand Report is available [here](#).

Well, let’s have a look at the key findings.

They start talking about things like “hybrid war,” and “targeting the role of popular opinion in shaping national strategy.” They talk about resilience: “The effect of ignoring domestic resilience is to undermine deterrence,” they said. But again, “resilience” is a very key word here. What is the UK concept for deterrence? We’ll have a look at that in a second. “Connecting the

FINDINGS:

- ▶ ‘Hybrid war’ **targets the role of popular opinion** in shaping national strategy.
- ▶ **Social resilience** is receiving increasing attention in relation to national security
- ▶ The effect of ignoring domestic resilience **is to undermine deterrence**

also in industry as well.

‘Global Britain’ and the Integrated Defence Review

That brings us then to the term “Global Britain,” because pretty much as soon as the United Kingdom left the European Union with Brexit, Dominic Raab, who was the Foreign Secretary at the time, headed over to the United States to introduce the U.S. to this new hashtag—Global Britain; the new British policy.

Very much at the center of that British policy was a piece of work which had been going on for quite a number of years. Now, Britain every five years or so runs a Defence Review; they work out how much money they’re going to spend on defence, what they’re going to spend it on, what their policies are, and so on. But the

armed forces and the government.” This is a key point again. “Clarity and transparency in the wars that Britain can fight.” Well, as we’ll see, Britain isn’t really going to be doing the fighting, others are going to be doing the fighting.

No Difference Between War and Peace

But the question is, what kind of fighting is it going to be? And does Britain see that there is a difference between the concepts of war and peace? Well, actually, not anymore.

This is General Mark Carleton-Smith, the Chief of the General Staff, speaking at the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) a couple of years ago:

Sir Mark Carleton-Smith: [video] Systematically exploiting instead that hybrid space that exists between those two increasingly redundant states of peace and war, artificial and binary characterization of a strategic context that no longer exists today, but which still drives much of our policy and legal definition and their associated frameworks.

Robinson: So, peace and war don’t exist anymore, these are binary concepts; we’re on a spectrum. So, he’s basically talking about the concept of perpetual warfare. Carlton-Smith was followed up around the same time by Sir Nick Carter, who is the Chief of the Defence Staff, also speaking to the Royal United Services Institute. I’m just going to highlight a couple of points out of this:

Carter was talking about Russia and China, of course, also talking about Yemen and Libya, but in particular, he was talking about the Sahel. This is a very



MSC/Marc Mueller
Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission.

interesting point I’ll elaborate further, shortly.

He talked about a “well-informed public debate,” and his concern about politics and the use of narratives, and about the media narratives not being under control. He talked about war being political. He talked about a “fusion” approach, this is what we’re talking about in terms of military and civilian connections and so on. But again, China is very much a key feature. NATO is turning its mind effectively to challenges of the future, includ-

ing China. He went on to talk about a “new UK strategic command,” and the need to operate in a “sub-threshold context.” He’s talking about trying to maintain a level of perpetual war, which is just below the level that reaches an actual all-out kinetic war.

But let’s come back to this issue of the Sahel for a second, because this is strategically a very key point for the United Kingdom, but also for the European Union.

At the 2019 Munich Defence Conference, Ursula von der Leyen [then German Defence Minister] was speaking, and on the sidelines of that conference former Prime Minister Tony Blair was speaking at a German university. Just have a listen to the similarity in the types of language that they are using and the topics that



DoS/Ralph Alswang
Former UK Prime Minister Tony Blair.

they’re talking about. Ursula von der Leyen here is being interviewed by a U.S. media organization:

Ursula von der Leyen: [video] Our collective defence, we are iron-clad committed to NATO. NATO of 29, that is collective defence, Article 5. But, there are problems and issues where I do not see NATO, but Europe has to be able to act.

Tony Blair: [video] The latest trans-Atlantic alliance with America is extremely important and we need to maintain it. The best partnership is a partnership where we have our capabilities that are also strong.

Von der Leyen: [video] I was talking about Africa. This is not a typical place for NATO. We are very committed to NATO in other places, but Africa is a place where we need to be able to act as Europeans....

Blair: [video] For example, one of the things that my institute [Institute for Global Change] does is work in Africa, and at the moment, we're particularly focussed on the Sahel group of countries. That's that band of countries across the north part of Sub-Saharan Africa, where you've got exploding populations, and dire poverty, radicalization and extremism. We may well face



the next wave of migration and extremism from those countries. It makes perfect sense, for Europe to have the military capability to help those countries with their security....

Von der Leyen: [video] And for that we created the European Defence Union to have the comprehensive approach with diplomacy, economic development, and the military means....

Robinson: OK. Of course, Tony Blair didn't suggest that perhaps his intervention in the Sahel may have been helping the insurgencies that go on there. But the point is, that area of North Africa, along the north coast, but also the Sahel countries, the European Union considers its southern neighborhood, so this is a pretty key area for them. Why would they be interested in that? Well, it seems to be of interest, particularly because of

China's activities in that part of the world, and the Belt and Road, which is offering development to these nations. So, integration, the Integrated Defence Review.

But let's have a little more depth on the Integrated Defence Review, and the core of that, which is the "Integrated Operating Concept," because this is important.

Shift from a Posture of Defence to Offense

The key central idea, they say, of the Integrated Operating Concept, is "*offensive rather than defensive*" [emphasis added]. And so this is no longer about defence, this is about offense. And this is the language that they use, to drive the conditions and tempo of strategic activity, rather than responding to the actions of others. So, we're now shifting towards an aggressive position, the way Britain is heading at the moment. The full text of the Ministry of Defence's Integrated Operating Concept is available [here](#).

But it gets worse than that, because it's not just Russia and China. It's also our own populations. The old distinction between foreign and domestic defence—the Integrated Operating Concept says that is increasingly irrelevant, now that fake news appears to originate not abroad but at home. It is gaining credibility and reach, stoking confusion, disagreement, division, and doubt in our societies. Because while we have this so-called fake news going around, we can't pursue our foreign policy without criticism, and so on.

"'Home' is no longer a security sanctuary," says the Integrated Operating Concept, "whence we may choose to launch interventions unhindered. 'Away' is no longer a regional horizon, but a global one, involving g-space and the electromagnetic spectrum." So, they want to involve space in this, as well.

A Warren of Bilateral and Multilateral Military Pacts

And so, what we're seeing is a shift very much towards a more aggressive position from the UK, but not just from the UK because the UK effectively wants to bring other countries into this, as well.

I think the key takeaway from this, is that this agreement [AUKUS] that was reached this week has been under negotiation for only 18 months. It came out of the blue. In fact, the same type of situation arose when the Lancaster House agreement was announced between

the UK and France in 2010. David Cameron had just become Prime Minister at that time, and he literally, on the day, or the day after he became prime minister, just announced, “By the way, we’ve entered this 50-year defence pact with France.” Nobody, Parliament had no warning of it; the public had no warning of it.

Then, the question is, well, who’s actually driving this policy? One organization that I’ve mentioned is the Rand Corporation. They directly fed their ideas into the Integrated Operating Concept, and the Integrated Defence Review. And there are many other sorts of thinktank level organizations feeding in this type of policy.

But I don’t think this policy is coming at a national level. It’s certainly coming at a higher level, and, in fact, when we look deeper at the types of policies that are coming out of the “Global Britain” idea, we find that they start heading back into the areas of the Green New Deal and Great Reset of the World Economic Forum-type policies as well.

Operations Outside of Governments

So, it even then becomes a new level of integration, because it’s not just about integration within the defence domain. It’s actually bringing in other policies, as well. And the British like to have this phrase “fusion doctrine” to describe this.

A final example of “fusion doctrine” is the new National Cyber Force (NCF), which the current Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, announced last November. The NCF is

helping to transform the UK’s cyber capabilities to disrupt adversaries and keep the UK safe, [we are told, and it’s doing so by drawing together] personnel from intelligence, cyber and security agency GCHQ, the MoD, the Secret Intelligence Service (MI6) and the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (DSTL), under one unified command for the first time.

But it gets better. It has been announced that the NCF will be based at Samsbury, a site which is owned and operated by BAE Systems, of Al-Yamamah fame. Remember that In 1985, Saudi Prince Bandar bin-Sultan and Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher struck the [al-Yamamah deal](#), in which, according to Bandar’s approved biographer William Simpson, BAE-produced

military aircraft were traded for a tanker of oil per day. The oil was then sold on the spot market, with a portion going to an unrecorded slush fund which was used to run covert intelligence operations around the world, such as the funding and arming of the Mujahideen in Afghanistan to fight the Soviet Union, giving birth to Al-Qaeda.

To my knowledge, this NCF basing is the first time an operational British military/intelligence service “force” will be integrated with a private security company in this way.

So this is where we’re heading. We’ve got a policy which is operating outside of whatever governance we

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- ▶ Emphasising the shared responsibility of **resilience**
- ▶ Developing a **UK concept of deterrence**
- ▶ Creating **coherence in communications**
- ▶ **Connecting** the armed forces and the government
- ▶ Engendering clarity and transparency **regarding the wars Britain can fight**
- ▶ Being open to a debate on **national service**

may feel we have in our own countries. It’s happening at an international level, and it’s happening over a longer period of time. That’s how I’m seeing it at the moment.

In response to questions from the audience, Robinson made these further related points:

Question on ‘Managing the Narrative’

Robinson: They have built an entire infrastructure to manage the narrative on a domestic level, and internationally. They set up all kinds of infrastructure, one of which is called “rapid response units” within the Cabinet office, which is all about effectively running a form of warfare on their own people, controlling social media narratives, making sure people are de-platformed when they need to be, and these kinds of things.

At the international level, I mentioned Theresa May's Rapid Response Mechanism. It's not a coincidence that these two things have the same or similar names. This was an agreement among the G7 countries that, internationally, narratives about Russia, China, any other government policy that would have an international remit, that those are agreed, that they're common, and that they're pushed out by every government within the British sphere. So, effectively, it's an information war as much as a kinetic war.

And, of course, they also bring cyber-warfare into this as well, because part of the hybrid war is running operations against campaign groups and so on, and it is increasingly happening that campaign groups are coming under so-called cyber attack. There's no obvious culprit for it, it's usually blamed on the Russians, but the assumption generally is that it's a domestic intelligence service attack of some kind.

So they are very much attempting to control public and popular opinion through the media, making sure that there are no counter-narratives appearing.

Q: On the military capability of the UK:

Robinson:The UK's military capability has been decimated to the point of not being able to operate on its own. The prime example is the two new aircraft carriers they built. But the Royal Navy no longer has the capability to put a carrier group to sea, because they don't have the support vessels to put to sea with both aircraft carriers, and even the one they have put to sea is in the form of a multinational group. So, we're back to this interdependence thing again.

One of the parts of the Integrated Defence Review that we didn't cover today, is that Britain is attempting to position itself as, let's call it the glue, that binds together all the other actors in the sort of Western defence union, if we call it that. So, if we've got a European Defence Union—if Europe ever gets that act together—if we've got the United States, the UK, we've got Australia and the other Five Eyes countries, and Britain is attempting to position itself as being effectively the command-and-control center for that, for the communications and encryption and so on between all the various actors.

What it looks like, is the UK is attempting to have everybody else do the actual fighting, while the UK sits back and tells them where to go. So that seems to be the core of what they're doing, but they always lead by example, so the first thing that the UK has done, is to

remove itself as an independent defensive force, even if we're an offensive force, actually, by effectively reducing all three of its military services to a point where they can't operate without the support of other nations.

Question on Reversing the Rush to War

I think the first step is for people to re-learn what constitutional government means, what it is, and to understand the machinations we've been talking about tonight. Because unless we understand those things, and understand how things are supposed to operate, we aren't going to find the right solutions.

I think what you guys do is a very good job of presenting options and suggestions and policies, that are very much counter to the kinds of things we've been talking about tonight. I think that our biggest problem about getting those types of policies to a much broader audience is the effort to shut down and de-platform, because the mainstream press and the media, the legacy press and media certainly are not going to be presenting these options to people.

So, people need to set aside political differences and start to work together on these bigger issues.



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