

INTRODUCTION:

This "Strawman" is a succinct paper offered to our readers to provoke thought and discussion to refine a clear 'way ahead' for the UKNDA.

At the moment this 'Strawman' is my own submission and does not represent any formal 'UKNDA policy'; rather it seeks to identify what questions need to be asked and answered. In other words these are my own thoughts that I offer to act as a catalyst.

Readers are invited to consider this "Strawman" and then submit their comments, suggestions and ideas on the subject to the author. I will collate any responses and present a final paper to the Board of Directors for any further action that might be considered necessary.

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A "Strawman" asking the question:

What should be the Basis for the UK's Defence Policy and its Implementation?

The AIM of this exercise is to identify how to provide and preserve sufficient, appropriate and fully resourced Armed Forces of the Crown to defend the United Kingdom, its people, their security and their vital interests at home and worldwide.

The methodology required to achieve the above aim might be to:

1. Understand, broadly, the United Kingdom's foreign policy and determine the Armed Forces' likely and ultimate roles in support of that policy.
2. Within the roles in 1. above, identify present and anticipated future threats, categorise and prioritise them.
3. Identify the size, type and cost of the Forces needed to deal with those threats.
4. Given that much of our existing equipment and its configuration is out of date and, whilst not entirely useless is, in many areas,

ineffective in its primary roles, identify the weaknesses and propose solutions.

5. Calculate all the manpower and training requirements to support the equipment programme, feeding the results into the "Long Term Costings".

6. Compile a draft "Long Term Costings" plan to meet the identified Defence requirements.

7. In parallel with the work above, come to a conclusion about the best, and most cost effective, structure within the Ministry of Defence and the Services themselves for the accomplishment of effective defence of the realm within the aims of British foreign policy (It being important to know what that foreign policy is!).

My personal suggestions as answers to and/or comment upon the above issues might be:

1. The fundamental defence tasks to be undertaken are:

- a. Neutralise seaborne threats to the survival and smooth running of the United Kingdom [and her allies].
- b. Undertake campaigns on land to safeguard the interests of the United Kingdom [and her allies].
- c. Defend the United Kingdom and its borders from direct attack.

2. One might use the tasks in 1. above to determine:

- a. A lead service, from those current, to determine the resources necessary for each task.
- b. How the current "Order of Battle" might be realigned to make an effective contribution to each set of required resources.
- c. Once b. has been done, agree that the remaining existing resources are redundant, get rid of them quickly and go on to identify the equipment and manpower "gaps" left to be filled for each task. These would form the basis of "Long Term Costings".

3. While "Jointery" has been deemed "a good thing" for years, it has increasingly been used to provide a "Lowest Common Multiple" in defence equipment terms. And it must be questionable whether embedding individuals from different service cultures ameliorates inter service rivalry (they may be "good eggs", but....). In war (or

defence, if you prefer) a commander is best placed if he has direct command of his full range of assets which, in turn, should be optimised for the environment in which they intend to operate. This argues for, say, organic air.

4. A head of steam is building up to be rid of the strategic deterrent since many believe it to have no role. Have this "many" considered the future towards which China is heading? And, whilst the United States of America is clearly a natural ally, we would not be worthy partners without making a proper contribution and, yes, some sacrifice for the alliance. And of all procurement programmes, the deterrent has consistently come in to time and cost thus giving most excellent value for money. Arguably, this force is unique in consistently meeting its aims in full.

5. If the UKNDA is to be effective and persuasive in presenting its case, all the proposed actions above will require considerable expertise, research and access to elements of the reams of study currently alive within the Ministry of Defence. It must have professional style in presentation and a well developed profile. How might all this be achieved?

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