

## Why think about defence?

Published: January 18, 2026, 7:53 am

---

There is a reason why I had to spend some time thinking about a potential European response to a threat from the USA over Greenland in the latter part of last week, which is reflected [in a blog post published this morning](#). That was because, over a couple of days, I was in discussion with the BBC about whether I would participate in a Sunday morning television broadcast on the politics of this issue, before being told that I had been dropped from the discussion, I think because the nature of the discussion itself changed late on Friday afternoon.

It would seem that someone in the BBC had noticed my argument that [defence spending makes no sense](#) unless a decision has been made as to what a country is defending, which is a theme [to which I return](#) this morning, and which I stressed was, in my opinion, a precondition for the political support within the communities of Europe for a common defence strategy if that is what is going to be required now.

I cannot be sure whether my more conceptual position was why I was dropped, when the initial approach was to discuss whether additional defence expenditure was affordable, with the seemingly inevitable contrast with spending on care being made as the alternative that had to be cut, or whether I had just failed to focus sufficiently on that one sole point.

Either way, I make the point that somebody at least noticed, and that forced me to think about an issue in a way that I might otherwise not have done quite so clearly, with this morning's blog post now being the sole outcome, although I am not entirely regretting that. I now realise that we have many more options available than I might otherwise have thought, especially when it comes to territorial rights, where, let's be clear, we do hold some of the power, not just in the UK, but in many other parts of Europe as well.

However, as I note in that post, the real question is: will Europe have the courage to act? That is something to which I have no answer at present.