

# **WW3 THREAT: Vladimir Putin's Russia now a 'SERIOUS PROBLEM' for the West, warns UK MP**

WORLD WAR 3: Britain and NATO missed their chance to contain the threat posed by Vladimir Putin and Russia, MP Crispin Blunt has warned, arguing they are now a "very serious problem."

Russia has stoked World War 3 fears in recent years after aggressively annexing Crimea and allegedly interfering in the US presidential elections.

Crispin Blunt, the Chair of the Foreign Affairs Select Committee, appeared on the BBC's Daily Politics to discuss UK defence spending and policy.

He told host Jo Coburn that Britain and its allies had missed their chance to contain the Russian threat, and that Vladimir Putin was now a "serious problem" for the West.

He said: "There was a strategic question for the nations of the West when the Soviet Union ended.



Getty•BBC - Crispin Blunt warned that Putin's Russia was now a "very serious problem" for the West

"I would argue that in that period of the 1990s we were too triumphalist and we failed to engage the interests of Russia properly post the end of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War.

"We missed our opportunity there, then the oil price rose.

"That gave Putin the opportunity to reboot the Russian economy, to reboot Russia's defence capabilities, and to give Russia some sense of national pride and nationalism.

"And that, together with this organised kleptocracy surrounding Putin, has created a serious problem now for the West because Russia is no longer within our sphere of influence.

"That, I would argue, is one of our failures of the Cold War."

Mr Blunt added that Britain was committed to meeting its NATO military spending obligations of two percent of GDP, but refused to say whether it would increase to three percent.

Defense Secretary Gavin Williamson reignited the debate over military spending over the weekend after a Sunday newspaper reported he had threatened to "crush" the Treasury and bring down Theresa May if the Ministry of Defense did not receive a £20 billion cash boost.

Mr Williamson allegedly boasted: "I made her - and I can break her."

Chancellor Philip Hammond responded by declaring that there was no money left for extra military spending.

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