MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1
Telephone 01-~~230 7822~~ 218 6169

MO 18/1/2

22nd November 1983

nb pm
DMS
22/11

Dear Janet,

Following the recent decision by NATO Ministers at their meeting in Canada to reduce further the number of NATO nuclear warheads in Europe, we have had prepared the attached unclassified briefing note which might be drawn upon by Ministers in constituency, etc, speeches and discussions. As such, it forms a supplement to this Department's booklet "Nuclear Deterrence and Disarmament: Briefing Notes", copies of which I am also circulating with this letter.

Copies of this letter and of the enclosures go to John Coles at No 10, to Private Secretaries to other members of the Cabinet, and to Richard Hatfield in Sir Robert Armstrong's office.

Yours sincerely,

Barry Neale

(B P NEALE)
Private Secretary

Miss Janet Lewis-Jones
Private Secretary to the Lord President of the Council

BRIEFING NOTES FOR MINISTERS: REDUCTIONS IN NATO'S NUCLEAR STOCKPILE

At the meeting of the NATO Nuclear Planning Group in Canada on 27/28 October 1983, NATO's Defence Ministers endorsed the recommendations of a comprehensive review of the size and composition of NATO's nuclear forces in Europe. Their decisions will lead to the most radical reduction in the number of warheads in Western Europe ever to have taken place, and will reduce the stockpile of nuclear warheads to its lowest level in 20 years.

2. Since December 1979 - when NATO agreed to the 'dual track' approach to the modernisation of its intermediate range nuclear forces and to arms control efforts aimed at reducing the level of forces of both superpowers in a balanced and verifiable way - NATO has withdrawn 1,000 US nuclear warheads in Europe. In October this year NATO agreed to reduce the stockpile by a further 1,400 warheads. In addition NATO is committed to withdrawing one warhead from Europe for each Pershing II or cruise missiles it proves necessary to deploy. So over the next five to six years NATO plans to withdraw some 3,000 nuclear warheads. Even if full deployment of Pershing II and cruise missiles take place, the number of warheads in Europe will have been cut by a third, and the number of warheads for shorter-range systems (eg aircraft and 'battlefield' nuclear weapons) will have been cut by a half. Five nuclear warheads will have been withdrawn for each new warhead deployed.

3. The reductions are not, as some critics have suggested, a propaganda ploy designed to offset the impact of the deployment of new NATO missiles in Europe. The report considered by Ministers represented the result of four years of intensive study by experts from NATO's capitals and military authorities. Nor will the warheads to be withdrawn consist solely of obsolete or unuseable weapons - all types of weapons system will contribute to the reductions. It is true of course to say that NATO has sought reductions in a way which would not compromise its essential security requirements. It would be quite wrong to do otherwise. Indeed the report considered by NATO's Defence Ministers also addressed possible improvements to shorter-range weapons systems and their supporting infrastructure - /although it should be stressed that such improvements are likely to be essentially evolutionary; the deployment of enhanced radiation or 'neutron' weapons was not considered./

4. But NATO is a defensive Alliance. None of its weapons will ever be used except in response to attack. This enables NATO to review its stockpile carefully to ensure that not one weapon more than is needed for the purposes of deterrence is retained. The reductions agreed by all NATO nations demonstrate clearly that the West is not guilty of 'fuelling the arms race', that the Warsaw Pact has no cause to feel threatened by NATO and no

cause to continue the relentless quantitative and qualitative improvement of its own weapons systems, nuclear and conventional, and that NATO has no plans for 'limited nuclear warfare' in the European theatre.

5. In contrast, the Soviet Union is continuing to improve the quality and increase the numbers of its equivalent weapons systems, including in some cases their deployment forward in Eastern Europe. Soviet threats of 'countermeasures' to the deployment of Pershing II and cruise missiles are empty gestures. Such measures had been planned for years; in some cases the new missile systems concerned were in development even before NATO's December 1979 decision. There is no reason however why the Soviet Union should not now match NATO's action and make a substantial reduction in its own stockpile. This is what the peace movement should be calling for. NATO has made clear its determination to reduce its stockpile to the lowest level consistent with its security: it is now up to the Soviet Union to demonstrate whether it has an equal commitment to peace.

# NUCLEAR DETERRENCE AND DISARMAMENT

## BRIEFING NOTES

# NUCLEAR DETERRENCE AND DISARMAMENT

## INTRODUCTION

1. The issues of nuclear deterrence and disarmament are of major public interest and debate. The Government welcomes informed discussion of these questions.

2. These briefing notes are designed for those who want information on the Government's policies in these fields. Much of the material is presented in the form of answers to the questions most frequently asked. But the opportunity has also been taken to include some relevant background material. The notes cover not only nuclear deterrence, but also the closely related issues of arms control and disarmament (principally the responsibility of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office) and civil defence (a Home Office responsibility).

3. The notes are divided into 7 main sections:

4. In addition to these notes the Government has published a range of material on nuclear issues in the form of factsheets, brochures and films. Some of these are described in Section 7. For further information about these notes and other material please contact:

Ministry of Defence
Defence Secretariat 17
Room 9156
Main Building
Whitehall
London SW1 Telephone: 01-218 6016/2971

Ministry of Defence
Defence Secretariat 17
Main Building
Whitehall SW1

4th Edition (1st Revision) August 1983

## I - BRITAIN'S NUCLEAR POLICY: THE KEY POINTS TO MAKE

### 1. GENERAL

a. The Government understands public concern about nuclear weapons; but they cannot be disinvented.

b. The Government shares the same aim as the unilateral disarmers to ensure that nuclear weapons are never used; but we differ on the means to achieve this.

c. We have avoided war in Europe for nearly 40 years. Anyone who wants to tear up existing policy must show that their alternative will work as well.

### 2. THE SOVIET THREAT

a. Soviet ideology seeks to impose communist values if necessary using force or blackmail backed by threat of force.

b. The Soviet Union has immense military power which is increasing all the time. In both nuclear and conventional forces it outnumbers NATO in Europe (Soldiers 1.2:1, Tanks 2.5:1, artillery 3:1, aircraft over 2:1) (Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces 5:1).

c. There is a proven Soviet willingness to resort to force to pursue its aims when they think they can get away with it (eg. Hungary, Czechoslavakia, Afghanistan).

d. The Soviet threat can be resisted provided NATO has sufficient modern conventional and nuclear forces to deter aggression at any level.

3. THE CASE FOR DETERRENCE

a. The aim of deterrence is to prevent war - nuclear or conventional - by persuading anyone thinking of attacking us that it would not be worth their while.

b. As long as the Soviet Union possesses massive nuclear and non-nuclear forces, NATO needs sufficient of both to convince them that they could not hope to gain by using these forces.

c. But deterrence is not the whole story: in parallel, whilst a military balance is maintained, we are constantly seeking lower levels of forces on both sides through arms control and disarmament.

4. THE CASE AGAINST ONE-SIDED NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT

a. One-sided nuclear disarmament by Britain would destabilise NATO and thus reduce the West's ability to deter aggression or the threat of force.

b. It would not make UK any less of a target for attack because Soviet systems would still be aimed at us as a member of the Alliance.

c. It takes no account of the existing Soviet conventional superiority (tanks, aircraft, guns) in Europe.

d. The Russians, who give such priority to their military power, would never follow our example: they have said as much.

e. It would cut no ice with countries thinking of acquiring nuclear weapons. Their actions will not be influenced by what the UK does, but by their own regional security interests.

f. It would undermine a number of important disarmament negotiations now in train aimed at reaching balanced multilateral force reductions and not merely limitations on growth. If the Rusians believe that the West is going to disarm anyway this removes the incentive for them to negotiate seriously. In the START talks the US has proposed large cuts in the number of strategic nuclear missiles and a cut of a third in the numbers of warheads. At the Intermediate Range Nuclear Force talks in Geneva, the US has proposed the Zero Option which would eliminate an entire class of nuclear weapons from both sides. If that is too radical for the Soviet Union, NATO would accept equal numbers of missile warheads at as low a level as the Soviet Union will accept. The Russians have submitted counter-proposals and both talks will take time.

g. There is no moral merit in abandoning nuclear weapons yet remaining in NATO and relying on US nuclear forces.

5. THE CASE FOR TRIDENT

a. The British independent deterrent strengthens our security by increasing the risks and uncertainties facing a potential aggressor in Europe. Our Polaris force has been supported by all recent Governments. The decision to acquire Trident has been welcomed by our NATO allies.

b. Polaris will need to be replaced by about 1995; the Trident decision has been taken to maintain this capability. Submarine launched cruise missile alternative would be more expensive. Failure to replace Polaris would be unilateral disarmament.

c. During the period when it is introduced into service Trident will account, on average, for only about 3% of the defence budget per year.

Its estimated cost will be less than that of the current Tornado aircraft programme. Trident is a more advanced system than Polaris. Its extra capability gives us an insurance against any advances in Soviet ABM defences well into the next century, and so strengthens its value as a deterrent.

6. THE CASE FOR NATO INTERMEDIATE RANGE NUCLEAR FORCE (INF) MODERNISATION

a. NATO needs INF to deter the Russians from threatening limited nuclear strikes on Europe in the expectation that the USA would stand aside. The need for them was pressed mainly by the Europeans to convince the Russians that the USA is firmly committed to Europes's defence. This is not to suggest that we have any doubts about the resolve of the US to protect Europe. Deterrence is a matter not of what we think but what any would-be aggressor might think.

b. Imbalance of 5 to 1 in intermediate range nuclear forces in or targetted on Europe. Soviet SS20s already deployed; NATO's comparable capability (largely of US F111 aircraft) ageing and increasingly vulnerable. Cruise and Pershing II missiles are NATO means of modernising this capability.

c. The unanimous NATO decision to modernise its Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces (INF) was accompanied by a parallel offer to negotiate limitations with the Russians on these weapons. Negotiations began in 1981. The NATO aim is to eliminate INF land-based missiles of most concern to both sides (the zero option). However the US announced in March 1983 that they are prepared to negotiate an interim agreement, under which NATO would reduce its planned deployment if the Soviet Union would reduce their corresponding missile warheads to an equal level. This demonstrates our flexibility and determination to reach an agreement if at all possible.

7. MYTHS ABOUT CRUISE MISSILES

Cruise missiles are not:

- an American plan to fight a limited nuclear war in Europe; they are to deter the Russians from thinking they could do so.

- a new capability: US and UK aircraft based in Britain have been doing the same job for years.

- first strike weapons: NATO have no such policy and cruise missiles are too slow, too few and too limited in range.

- under sole US control. Matter for joint US/UK decision.

8. THE CASE FOR CIVIL DEFENCE

a. Deterrence can prevent war, but as long as the Soviet Union poses a threat to our security, any humane Government must cater for even the remotest possibility that war might come. Civil defence is not specific to nuclear attack but relevent to any form of attack affecting the civil population.

b. No civil defence measures could make any kind of war acceptable. But Government at all levels has a duty to help people if we were ever attacked.

c. Any form of attack short of thousands of nuclear bombs would leave many millions of survivors whose numbers could be increased by even elementary civil defence measures. Their survival and recovery would depend largely on the plans which had been made in peacetime and on the implementation of plans by the surviving agencies of government.

d. Our civil defence arrangements, are not so good at, say, public shelter provision, as those of such countries as Switzerland and Sweden. But they are as good if not superior to that of many other major nations. Warning of enemy attack, monitoring of intensity of fallout radiation, plans for continuation of government and essential services, and public information in a crisis, are all areas where our arrangements are at least as good as other countries. However we are constantly considering what improvements should be made in the light of the risk of war and available finances.

e. The Government is to strengthen the regulations placing civil defence functions on local authorities. The regulations will raise the standard of the nation's civil defence.

## II - SPEAKING NOTES ON NUCLEAR POLICY

### 1. DETERRENCE

We in Britain belong to NATO, an organisation which was set up by the countries of Western Europe and North America after the Second World War, because of the fears caused by Russian expansion into Eastern Europe. NATO is a defensive Alliance; its members regard an attack on one as an attack on all, and are pledged to assist each other. The Alliance has no aggressive intentions against the Soviet Union or any other country. It is, however, the countries of the Warsaw Pact and in particular the Soviet Union, which present the greatest threat to our security. The Soviet Union has immense conventional and nuclear forces - far more than could reasonably be required for purely defensive purposes. The invasion of Afghanistan is only the most recent demonstration that the Soviet Union is prepared to use military strength to achieve its political objective. While, of course, NATO does not need to match the Warsaw Pact weapon for weapon, we do need a range of forces, nuclear and conventional, so as to be able to show that we can defend ourselves against attack at any level. By demonstrating this we aim to deter such an attack from ever being mounted against us in the first place.

Deterrence is not an attractive way of ensuring peace. But at least it has worked: it has helped to keep Europe at peace for almost 40 years, despite circumstances that were often difficult. To abandon our security system now, in favour of some alternative which would be quite unproven would be immensely dangerous. Deterrence provides the necessary stability to enable us to negotiate international agreements on disarmament measures which will really give us a safer world if they are verifiable and apply equally to both sides. The possession of nuclear weapons is an essential fact of deterrence: in a world where such weapons exist the NATO alliance must be able to deter their use by an enemy or to resist blackmail based on the threat of nuclear attack.

## 2. THE CASE FOR AN INDEPENDENT BRITISH NUCLEAR DETERRENT

Britain's nuclear forces are fully committed to the NATO Alliance, but they remain ultimately under the control of the United Kingdom Government. It is this independent control which makes their contribution to deterrence so important. Even if the Russians, perhaps some time in the future, thought they could take the risk of attacking the Alliance in the mistaken belief that the United States would not be prepared to use its nuclear weapons, they would also have to take account of those weapons - with enormous destructive power - in European hands. The risks and uncertainties they would face in starting a war would be so much greater. So, therefore, would the likelihood that they would be deterred. We have made this unique contribution to Alliance deterrence for over twenty-five years. Our Allies have repeatedly and clearly recognised its importance. To give it up, or let it fade away, would be an act of folly at a time when Soviet military power is growing at an alarming rate, and the disparity between the forces of NATO and those of the Warsaw Pact is continuing to widen.

### The Decision to Acquire Trident

Our Polaris submarines first came into service in the 1960s. They will continue to provide a formidable deterrent for the next decade or so. But it will become increasingly difficult and costly to maintain both submarines and missiles in service beyond the mid 1990s. In addition to being fully under United Kingdom control, any replacement system must be able to pose a convincing threat. In other words it must be able to inflict damage on the Soviet Union out of all proportion to any gains they might hope to make by attacking us. It must also be invulnerable to surprise attack. The choice of another nuclear-propelled submarine, like the Polaris boats, as the vehicle to carry the weapons was essentially dictated by this need for invulnerability. Unlike any land-based system, these submarines are almost impossible to detect once deployed in the deep oceans.

The choice of missile lay between another ballistic missile like Polaris, or a cruise missile. Cruise missiles cost less each. But much larger numbers are needed to provide an equivalent deterrent threat, and they are much more vulnerable to likely long-term improvements in Soviet defences. Because of the larger numbers, cruise missiles would need many more submarines, and these are the most expensive single component of a new force. A cruise missile force would therefore cost more. For a deterrent capability intended to last well into the next century, Trident has clear advantages over any other ballistic missile system on both operational and cost grounds. Its purchase from the US, on very favourable terms, will allow us to continue the highly successful collaboration which we have over Polaris. The decision to go for the Trident II (D5) system rather than the previously announced Trident I (C4) system is to retain commonality with the US Navy and avoid problems of the UK having to operate a unique system. This will save money overall. It is not because we need the increased accuracy or capability of the D5 missile. The decision to process Trident missiles in the US is also to take advantage of commonality and save money. It will not lessen the independence of the UK deterrent.

## The Cost of Trident

Trident will clearly be a major item in the defence programme. But it is similar to other major programmes like the Tornado aircraft, taking about 3% of the total defence budget on average during the period when it is introduced into service. Once in service it will, like Polaris, be very economical in running costs and its demand on skilled Service manpower. Over the last twenty-five years we have devoted between 2% and 10% of the defence budget to our strategic nuclear forces, so Trident does not represent any dramatic change. It should not be seen as an addition to the defence programme, but an integral part of it. The Trident programme will not prevent continued improvements in other areas of Britain's contribution to NATO. But it is hard to imagine any way in which this money could be spent on other defence uses which

would make such a major contribution to the collective security of the Alliance. The most costly part of the system, the Trident submarines, will be built in the UK. Over its life, cost will be less than 20 pence per person per week.

## 3. GROUND LAUNCHED CRUISE MISSILES (GLCMs)

Both NATO and the Warsaw Pact have had intermediate or medium range nuclear forces (INF) in Europe for many years. For over ten years NATO's longer range forces of this type have been the FIII and the Vulcan aircraft based in the UK. The Vulcans were retired in 1982, leaving approximately 170 FIII aircraft. The force is ageing and becoming increasingly vulnerable to new Soviet weapons. Over the period the Russians have been modernising and increasing their equivalent forces, so that they have some 850 INF missiles and aircraft aimed at Europe, including the formidable SS20 missile system. Over 350 SS20s, each with 3 warheads, have now been deployed, two-thirds threatening Western Europe. For NATO to do nothing could give the Russians the impression that they could use their growing nuclear arsenal to threaten limited strikes against Western Europe from a sanctuary in the Soviet Union - strikes which they would judge as being not sufficiently devastating as to provoke an all-out response by NATO's strategic weapons. For these reasons the Alliance judged that some modernisation of its capability was necessary to sustain deterrence. Therefore, in December 1979 NATO Ministers decided unanimously to introduce Pershing II and Ground Launched Cruise Missiles in Europe, starting in 1983.

In parallel with this decision to deploy GLCMs and Pershings the Alliance offered to negotiate limits on the numbers of intermediate range nuclear weapons. To show that NATO was not seeking an arms race, the US unilaterally withdrew 1000 nuclear warheads from Europe and have undertaken to withdraw further warheads on a one-for-one basis as the new missiles are deployed. In response to this offer, the Soviet Union initially refused to talk, but eventually they agreed to negotiations which began on 30 November 1981. Just

before the start of these negotiations NATO proposed the 'zero option' solution, ie cancellation of the planned Pershing II and cruise deployments if the Russians would dismantle all their similar missiles, notably the SS20s. The limits must be on all missiles world-wide. The SS20 has sufficient range to strike targets in Europe when based east of the Ural Mountains.

NATO is pursuing the zero option as far and away the best solution to the problem of medium range missiles, but if that is too radical for the Soviet Union, we are prepared to agree to equal numbers of missile warheads at as low a level as the Soviet Union will accept. The end of 1983, when the first cruise and Pershing II missiles will be installed, will be no deadline for the negotiations. They can continue. The programme to install NATO missiles stretches over five years and could at any stage be stopped, changed or reversed following success in the negotiations. But postponement or cancellation of NATO's plans to introduce Cruise and Pershing II missiles would certainly wreck the chances of agreement to reduce missile numbers on both sides.

If it could be achieved such an agreement would increase confidence between East and West and pave the way for further negotiations on other systems, such as medium range aircraft.

The NATO decision of December 1979 underlines the Americans commitment to the defence of Europe. It is not part of some plot to ensure that a limited war can be fought on European soil which will not involve the superpowers. Nor does it mean that Britain is made more of a target for nuclear attack. The Americans have never assumed that they could limit a nuclear war to Europe. It was in fact the Europeans themselves who wanted cruise missiles in Europe to deter the Russians from any belief that they could fight a nuclear war in Europe without putting Russian territory at risk. Cruise missiles do not give NATO a new capability. They simply modernise an existing capability hitherto provided by Vulcan and FIII aircraft.

## 4. ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT

Britain is committed to international negotiations for agreement on measures to limit and reduce the high level of armaments throughout the world. In the words of the Prime Minister at the second UN Special Session on Disarmament in June 1982, we are working for 'the balanced and verifiable reduction of armaments in a manner which enhances peace and security'. Britain, with its allies, was responsible for the zero option on INF. British delegations play a full role in negotiations in the Committee on Disarmament (CD) at Geneva, in the Mutual and Balanced Force Reductions (MBFR) at Vienna, and the review meeting of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) at Madrid. Britain takes part in regular disarmament discussions at the United Nations, in the European Community and in NATO.

We have now entered an important new phase of disarmament negotiations. The prizes are high and the path may be difficult; but there is no substitute for the patient work of diplomatic negotiation. The radical proposals which NATO has put forward offer an unprecedented opportunity for the nations of East and West to reach agreement on practical measures of nuclear arms control and disarmament. Serious negotiations are now taking place between the United States and the Soviet Union on reducing both strategic arms (START) and intermediate-range nuclear forces (INF). Britain is involved through the close consultations which take place in NATO.

For example, Britain strongly supports the so-called 'zero option' for long-range INF missiles, under which NATO would scrap its plans to deploy Cruise and Pershing II missiles in Western Europe, in return for the dismantling of the comparable SS4, SS5 and SS20 missiles targetted on Western Europe. This would be far and away the best solution. But in the absence of agreement on it, there would have to be balanced numbers, agreed at the negotiating table in Geneva.

Britain has warmly welcomed the opening of the US/Soviet Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START) in June 1982. These concern the central strategic systems of the two sides: Inter-Continental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs), Submarine-Launched Ballistic Missiles (SLBMs) and long-range bombers. Britain has given its backing to the radical proposal made by the US for large cuts in strategic ballistic missiles and warheads. The Soviet counter-proposal of a 25% cut in strategic systems does not go so far, but signifies a willingness to move towards substantial reductions.

Success in these negotiations would be helpful to progress in other areas of arms control, such as achieving a comprehensive ban on nuclear weapons tests. Our negotiations with the US and USSR from 1977 to 1980 failed because the three parties could not agree on measures to prevent cheating. The verification problem is being studied by a working group in the Committee on Disarmament, to which British experts are contributing ideas.

Preventing the spread of nuclear weapons to further countries is essentially a political problem which must be tackled by international cooperation. Efforts in recent years have concentrated on making the safeguards system of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) more effective. Britain plays a leading part in these efforts to improve access to the peaceful benefits of nuclear energy, while minimising the risk of transferring sensitive technology. We also support the setting up of nuclear-weapon-free zones (NWFZ) by international agreement in areas against which nuclear weapons are not deployed, as in Latin America.

## 5. ONE-SIDED DISARMAMENT

Against this background of multilateral effort, the Government does not accept that unilateral disarmament is a rational policy. NATO's strategy of deterrence has helped keep the peace in Europe for nearly 40 years. To abandon

our security system now, in favour of an untried and unproven alternative would be immensely dangerous. Unilateral nuclear disarmament by the UK would do nothing to reduce the risk of war - indeed by undermining NATO's ability to deter aggression, such a move might make war more likely. Proposals of unilateral nuclear disarmament overlook the existing imbalance in conventional forces in Europe in favour of the Warsaw Pact. Without the restraint imposed by nuclear weapons, there would be greater uncertainty and instability.

There is no evidence to suggest that unilateral nuclear disarmament by the UK would persuade others to follow suit. Mr Andropov has said quite clearly that the Soviet Union would not do so. Indeed the whole history of unilateralism is a succession of unrequited gestures. To take but a few examples: the events of the 1930s show only too clearly how restraint by one side in the face of re-armament by the other can lead to disaster. After the Second World War, Britain unilaterally destroyed its offensive capability in chemical weapons and the US has allowed its capability to decline (NATO as such does not possess chemical weapons); by contrast the Soviet Union has continued to build up its CW capability (estimated as at least 300,000 tonnes of chemical agents, much of it in forward areas with modern delivery systems) and to develop a chemical war-fighting doctrine. Between 1968 and 1974 the US carried out a planned reduction of its defence budget, whereas the Soviet Union proceeded with a programme of military expansion. While NATO's collective military expenditure fell in real terms by 9.4% between 1969 and 1978, that of the Warsaw Pact rose by 31.5%. Since 1968, when the superpowers agreed to start negotiations on nuclear disarmament, NATO has deliberately refrained from deploying new Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces (INF) in Europe. In 1976 - within one year of signing the Helsinki Final Act on Security and Co-operation in Europe - the Soviet Union began to install the new SS-20 missiles targetted on European cities. In 1981 the US completed a unilateral withdrawal of 1000 nuclear warheads from Europe; the response from the Russians has been nil.

The weight of evidence shows that unilateral action by one side removes the incentive for the other to negotiate. There is a danger that talk of one-sided disarmament moves - however well intentioned - will encourage the Russians to block present multilateral negotiations in the belief that if they wait long enough the West will disarm on its own, damaging its security interests, without obtaining Soviet concessions in return.

## 6. CIVIL DEFENCE

NATO and the UK seek to avoid war through deterrence. That policy has succeeded and will continue to do so provided the Alliance maintains its unity and strength. But as long as we believe that the Soviet Union proves a real threat to our security any humane Government must cater for even the remotest possibility that deterrence might fail and that war might come. If that ever happened our basic civil defence arrangements could save millions from the effects of attack. These arrangements include an effective warning of attack and fallout radiation, practical advice to help people survive the attack, stockpiles of vital supplies, arrangements for medical care and the continuation of government at all levels to organise recovery. No civil defence arrangements could possibly reduce the consequences of a large scale nuclear attack to a level which would make nuclear war acceptable to the UK. But it is the Government's duty to be able to help survivors if we were ever attacked, remote as that possibility is.

For this reason the Government is to strengthen the regulations placing civil defence functions on local authorities, which will be required to arrange for the peacetime training and exercising of staff and volunteers. Local authorities (including district councils and London boroughs) will also have to provide emergency headquarters. The new regulations will raise the standard of the nation's civil defence.

## III - QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT NUCLEAR POLICY

Q1. ISN'T HIGH EXPENDITURE ON NUCLEAR WEAPONS UNACCEPTABLE AT A TIME WHEN SPENDING ON, FOR EXAMPLE, HEALTH, EDUCATION AND SOCIAL WELFARE IS BEING DRASTICALLY REDUCED?

A1. The Government understands and sympathises with the feelings of those people who believe that money devoted to defence would, at a time of economic stringency, be better spent on other areas of public expenditure. No Government in a democratic state wants to pile up weapons which are unnecessary. There are many ways of spending money which would be more popular with the electorate. The Government of the Soviet Union - which is not responsible to any electorate - spends twice as high a proportion of its resources on defence as we do. However, the first responsibility of the Government must be the security of the nation, and if they were to put that security at risk by inadequate precautions they would inevitably endanger all the things such as health, education and social welfare, which we quite rightly value in our society. We, and a good many others, learnt that lesson the hard way in the 1930s and World War II. Unilateral disarmament was tried then, and failed. It must not be allowed to happen again. Our nuclear forces cost us well under one half of one per cent of total government expenditure.

Q2. ISN'T IT BETTER TO BE RED THAN DEAD?

A2. You say that you would rather be "red" than "dead". It would be a miserable choice to have to make; but fortunately it is not one that any of us has to face. The main object of the defence policy of this and preceding Governments is to ensure that we shall never have to do so. We belong to NATO, and we are committed with our Allies to the strategy of deterrence. The aim of this strategy is to make it clear that any attack on any NATO member would involve risks to the aggressor out of all proportion to the advantages which he might hope to gain. This firm defence strategy of deterrence has kept peace and maintained freedom in Western Europe for some 38 years now. As long as we maintain deterrence, there is no reason why the British people should ever have to decide to be "red" or "dead". This is a bogus choice: it is better to be neither than either.

Q3. ISN'T 'DETERRENCE' AN OBSOLETE EXCUSE FOR THE ARMS RACE?

A3. Deterrence means preventing war. We have to accept that nuclear weapons, including the knowledge, technology and materials necessary to make them, exist in both East and West. The policy of all British Governments in recent times, and all our Western Allies, is based on nuclear deterrence: to ensure that the Soviet leadership can never calculate that any possible gain from starting a war against us would be worth the risks. But that is not the end of it. No-one, especially from within the ethical traditions of the free world, can rest comfortably on such a policy alone as the basis of international peace for the rest of time. That is why we have to search unremittingly for better ways of ensuring a stable world. Vital amongst these is the Government's commitment to pursue effective measures of arms control and disarmament. But in the meantime, for deterrence to remain effective, we must from time to time modernise our equipment as existing systems become obsolete.

Q4. AREN'T YOU NOW PLANNING FOR A LIMITED NUCLEAR WAR?

A4. The West does not believe that nuclear weapons could be used to achieve a military victory in any meaningful sense; and once nuclear exchanges began there would be an appalling risk of escalation into all-out nuclear war. We and our Allies need no convincing of this.

But we also have to convince the Russians that they could not hope to win a limited nuclear war either. With the deployment of accurate modern weapons like the SS20 missile system, the Russians have greatly improved their ability to mount limited nuclear strikes on our military bases and shipping. The purpose of, for example, mobile cruise missiles is to demonstrate that we have the means of responding to such attacks (and of evading them) without having to resort immediately to all-out retaliation.

We have no desire to fight a limited nuclear war and no belief that we could in any sense win one; our aim is simply to ensure that the Russians do not believe that they could win one.

(See also A11)

Q5. WHY HAVE YOU DECIDED TO BUY TRIDENT?

A5. The existing Polaris force entered service in the 1960s. By the 1990s it will be approaching the end of its useful life - in particular the submarine hulls and associated machinery will start wearing out. To fail to plan to replace it - which means taking decisions now because of the long time it takes to get defence equipment into service - would be to give up unilaterally our independent deterrent which has helped keep the peace in Europe for over 30 years. It could make war more likely, not less. All the options for a successor system were carefully examined and it was decided that once again a ballistic missile force based on nuclear powered submarines (which can hide deep in the oceans, virtually invulnerable from attack) was the most appropriate system.

Q6. WHY IN PARTICULAR HAVE YOU GONE FOR THE TRIDENT D5 SYSTEM?

A6. It was originally intended to adopt the Trident I C4 system, which would be adequate to meet the UK's deterrent needs. However this will be phased out of US service earlier than expected. So as to retain commonality and avoid problems of the UK having to support a system which only it operates ("uniqueness") the Government has decided to go instead for the Trident II (D5) system. This will be cheaper in the longer run, and it will still only cost on average about 3% of the defence budget over the next 18 years. D5 was <u>not</u> chosen because of the increased accuracy or capability of the missile system.

Q7. ISN'T TRIDENT D5 MORE THAN THE UK NEEDS? WHAT ABOUT PROLIFERATION?

A7. Certainly the C4 system would have met the UK's deterrent needs. But Trident has to provide the UK's strategic deterrent until well into the 21st century. It has to be capable of coping with advances in Soviet missile defences. Like Polaris, Trident will consist of 4 submarines each with 16 missile tubes. Trident certainly has the capability to carry more warheads. But it has been made clear that there is no intention of using the full capability of the system. When it enters service in the 1990s, Trident will represent the same small proportion of Soviet Strategic forces (even if these are reduced on the lines of the US START proposals) as did Polaris when it entered service in 1970.

Q8. WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO PROCESS TRIDENT MISSILES IN THE US?

A8. Again, to take advantage of commonality with the US Navy System and to save money (several hundred million pounds compared with earlier plans).

Q9. CRUISE MISSILES ARE "FIRST STRIKE" WEAPONS - HOW DO YOU RECONCILE THIS WITH A POLICY OF DEFENCE AND DETERRENCE?

A9. NATO concepts of deterrence do not envisage any type of "first strike" - the main aim is to maintain the peace. But in any event, as the Soviet Union can see quite clearly, the West has not and is not developing the physical capability for a "first strike" strategy even if we wanted one.

A "first strike" means a surprise attack intended to destroy an opponent's nuclear weapons and, hence, remove his ability to retaliate. Cruise missiles are neither intended for a "first strike" role, nor are they capable of it.

Cruise missiles, because of their slow speed, would take 3-4 hours to reach the Soviet Union from the UK. Any kind of mass attack by cruise missiles would be detected in plenty of time for the Soviet authorities to mobilise their own nuclear forces before it arrived. The number to be deployed in Europe is much smaller than the number of Soviet missile silos, many of which are beyond the range of cruise missiles based in Europe, and in addition the Russians have now deployed over 350 mobile SS20 ballistic missiles, of which about two thirds face Western Europe. These are invulnerable to attack once they have deployed away from their main bases. Like the West, the Soviet Union also has missile-firing submarines with nearly 1,000 ballistic missiles which provide the ultimate guarantee against any attempt to mount a first strike attack.

These factors were a consideration in the NATO decision to deploy cruise missiles, it was intended that they should be clearly deterrent and defensive rather than aggressive systems.

Q10. YOU SAY THAT NATO DOES NOT PLAN A FIRST NUCLEAR STRIKE, BUT SURELY THAT IS NOT WHAT MEMBERS OF THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT HAVE SAID?

A10. NATO is a purely defensive Alliance and its leaders have pledged that none of its weapons conventional or nuclear would ever be used except in response to attack. NATO leaders solemnly committed themselves to this in Bonn in June 1982. NATO's strategy of flexible response makes clear that, faced with the possibility of overwhelming defeat at the conventional level, the Alliance reserves the right to use nuclear weapons in its defence. The purpose of this strategy is to create the strongest doubt in the mind of Soviet planners about their ever being able to limit the extent of a war to Europe. The fact that the Alliance has necessarily thought through all its possible courses of action in the worst possible case should not be interpreted to mean that such an outcome is regarded as probable or even likely; nor should it be allowed to obscure the fact that NATO's strategy remains essentially one of deterrence.

[Note: Essential for questioner to recognise 'first strike' and 'first use' are technical terms which often become confused. As explained in the answer to Q9 'first strike' means a surprise nuclear attack designed to destroy an opponent's nuclear weapons and hence his ability to retaliate. It forms no part of any NATO intentions. 'First use' means using nuclear weapons first in an existing conventional conflict. NATO recognises this is a course which cannot be ruled out in advance, for example, in a situation where the Alliance was facing defeat at the conventional level. This is not to say that it would not be a course involving a very great degree of risk.]

(See also A12)

Q11. WHY SHOULD WE TRUST THE UNITED STATES WHEN THEY CLEARLY INTEND TO LIMIT ANY FUTURE WAR TO EUROPE?

A11. If the US wanted to limit any future war to Europe without themselves being involved, the last thing they should do would be to station their forces and their nuclear weapons in Europe. The decision to deploy US Pershing II and cruise missiles in Europe enhances deterrence by demonstrating to the Russians that the US see the defence of Europe as indissoluble from the defence of their own country. The Russians would know very well that the US President had agreed to any decision to fire the missiles and in fact they have stated that they would regard any attack by US nuclear weapons in Europe as coming from the US itself. There can be no illusion therefore on either side that Europe can be fought over in a limited war, away from superpower sanctuaries.

Q12. WHY IS NATO UNWILLING TO FOLLOW THE SOVIET UNION'S PLEDGE NOT TO BE THE FIRST TO USE NUCLEAR WEAPONS?

A12. The first thing to say here is that the NATO Heads of Government made a promise at their meeting in Bonn in June last year that no NATO weapons, nuclear or conventional, will ever be used, except in response to attack. The Government believe that a declaration of "no first use" of nuclear weapons would not reduce the chance of war, but would in fact increase the risk. Their reasoning is as follows: The fact is that NATO is confronted by massive Warsaw Pact conventional forces. In foreseeable circumstances, therefore, there could be a temptation for the Russians to threaten to fight a successful limited war in Europe which, they might gamble, need not provoke the Americans into using intercontinental nuclear weapons. NATO policy is to ensure that the Russians can never be certain that they will be able to fight a limited war in Europe. If we were to make a "no first use" declaration we would risk removing the uncertainty in the Russians' minds and thereby greatly increasing the risk of their being tempted into a conventional attack on Europe. They would also be in a far stronger position to limit our freedom by threatening such an attack. This does not mean that NATO are in any sense committing themselves to any decision in principle to use nuclear weapons first if we found ourselves losing a war fighting with conventional weapons. It simply means that we think it would be wrong, in the interests of preventing war, to volunteer to renounce the option. The Soviet pledge is selective; it does not rule out aggression with conventional weapons (like the Bonn declaration), and is of doubtful value since it could never be sufficiently relied on should war ever break out.

Q13. WHY DO WE NEED CRUISE MISSILES?

A13. At the beginning of NATO's history it was assumed that any serious Soviet attack on the West would be met by the full strength of the Western nuclear strategic force. This was called the doctrine of 'massive retaliation'. It was the agreed strategy of the Alliance for several years. It became, however, steadily more clear that this was not an entirely credible deterrent, particularly as the Soviet Union acquired its own strategic nuclear arsenal. The Russians might well doubt whether the Alliance would in fact respond with a full nuclear strike against Soviet use of its massive superiority in conventional forces. Thus, there came into being the present Alliance strategy of flexible response. This strategy does not mean that we need to match the Russians exactly at all levels of armaments. It does mean that if we are to have an effective deterrent, that deterrent must operate at all levels, and not just at the level of strategic nuclear forces.

The Soviet Union has modernised and significantly upgraded its capability at the so called 'intermediate range' level. The European allies become worried in the late 70s that the Soviet Union was building up medium-range nuclear forces (the SS20s) whereas NATO had nothing comparable. It was feared that this growing imbalance in this particular range of weaponry might tempt the Soviet Union into adventures in Europe. The Russians might well believe that their medium range nuclear forces would enable them in a crisis to bring coercive pressure to bear on Europe with impunity. Hence the 'double track' decision by NATO in December 1979. We agreed that we would, if necessary, modernise our intermediate medium-range forces (consisting of ageing aircraft) by introducing Cruise and Pershing to replace out-of-date weaponry thus reasserting the NATO deterrent at every level. At the same time, however, we would try to open negotiations with the Soviet Union which would make this INF modernisation unnecessary by persuading them to get rid of the SS20s. This NATO decision has now led to the negotiations in Geneva. Without that NATO

A13. Continued

decision there would have been no negotiations, and if we now abandon the decision to modernise if necessary, then it is clear that the negotiations would not succeed. The Russians may agree to a workable arrangement at Geneva, provided they are clear in their own minds that without such an arrangement we have the determination to modernise our own forces. Failure by the West to modernise would demonstrate that we had neither the capability nor the will to provide credible deterrent forces.

Q14. WHAT ARE THE ARRANGEMENTS FOR CONTROL OF CRUISE MISSILES IN THE UK?

A14. Arrangements for the control of cruise missiles will be exactly the same as those which have governed the use of all the US nuclear weapons systems - aircraft and ballistic missile submarines - which have been based in the country for over 30 years. These are provided for in an understanding, first reached between Mr Attlee and President Truman in 1951, reaffirmed by Mr Churchill and President Truman in 1952 and subsequently reaffirmed on each change of President or Prime Minister, which lays down that any such use would be a matter for joint decision by the two Governments. The arrangements for implementing the understanding have recently been reviewed in the light of the planned deployment of US cruise missiles in the UK, and both the Prime Minister and the President have satisfied themselves that they are effective. As the Prime Minister has said: "The effect of the understandings and of the arrangements for implementing them is that no nuclear weapon would be fired or launched from British territory without the agreement of the British Prime Minister" (Hansard 12 May 1983, Column 435)

Separate point: The understanding will apply to all US cruise missiles based in the UK whether on or off base.

Q15. WHY CAN WE NOT HAVE A "DUAL KEY" SYSTEM OF CONTROL?

A15. The option of having a "dual key" was open to the British Government in 1979 when the decision was taken to deploy US cruise and Pershing missiles in Europe. This would however have involved buying the missiles and the supporting equipment and providing British Servicemen to man them with the United States providing only the nuclear warheads. The cost of this would have been in the order of a billion pounds together with the cost of well over 1000 British Servicemen. The Government was entirely satisfied with the existing arrangements for joint decision making which had applied to US weapons in this country for over 30 years, and decided that the money would be better spent on other items in the defence budget.

Q16. IF THE EXISTENCE OF SOVIET SS20's WITH NO CORRESPONDING WESTERN SYSTEMS TO MATCH THEM CONSTITUTES AN UNACCEPTABLE THREAT TO THE WEST, HOW HAVE WE LIVED SAFELY THROUGH THE LAST FEW YEARS?

A16. NATO's earlier LRINF eg British Vulcan bombers and US FIII's have either been phased out or are ageing and increasingly vulnerable to Soviet air defence. Meanwhile Soviet SS20s have grown to their present level of 1000 warheads. As men like Helmut Schmidt and Henry Kissinger have pointed out, this situation risks becoming very unhealthy for European security and stability. Even in peace-time we have seen the effect of the SS20 programme on public confidence. In the event of major crisis it could give rise to dangerous Soviet miscalculations or at the very least a temptation to apply coercive pressure on Western Europe. The price of freedom is eternal vigilance and a continuous readiness to keep the deterrent in good repair.

Q17. SURELY CRUISE MISSILES ARE A NEW TYPE OF WEAPON, AND REPRESENT AN ESCALATION OF THE ARMS RACE?

A17. Cruise missiles incorporate advanced technology; but there is nothing new about the basic concept. Cruise missiles are unmanned missiles which fly at slow speed (about the same as a commercial jet) and low level (to avoid radar detection). The German doodlebug of World War II was a first generation cruise missile. Advantage has now been taken of modern technology to enable cruise missiles to fly accurately over longer distances, by using onboard computers and guidance equipment to guide a course to the target. There is nothing new either about the idea of intermediate range nuclear forces - ones which can reach targets in Western Europe from bases in the Soviet Union and vice-versa. The Russians have had this capability in the form of ballistic missiles (SS4, SS5) for many years. NATO has had it in the form of UK Vulcan and US F111 aircraft based in the United Kingdom. The Russians have elected to modernise their capability; the SS20 is mobile where the SS4 and SS5 were not; it has longer range; and it has multiple warheads. Modernisation is necessary on the NATO side because aircraft are becoming increasingly vulnerable to Warsaw Pact air defences. Cruise missiles will maintain and modernise a Western capability which has up to now been provided by aircraft.

Cruise missiles will not escalate the "arms race". It is the Soviet Union who in recent years have greatly expended their nuclear forces, in particular with the introduction of large numbers of SS20- missiles, threatening Western Europe from bases in the Soviet Union. There is no attempt by the West to match the Soviet forces exactly; cruise is of shorter range than the SS20, has a much longer flight time, has only one warhead (SS20 has three) and total numbers planned involve fewer warheads or launchers than the Soviet Union has already deployed. They are on the contrary designed to strengthen deterrence by maintaining a credible capability in an area where the Russians have greatly improved theirs.

The Soviet Union is also devoting significant resources to developing cruise missile technology for deployment in the land, sea or air modes. We expect Soviet missiles of this kind to be in service in the next few years.

Q18. HAVEN'T CRUISE MISSILES TURNED THE UNITED KINGDOM, ESPECIALLY GREENHAM COMMON AND MOLESWORTH, INTO A PRIME SOVIET TARGET?

A18. Soviet missiles have been targetted on Western Europe, including the UK, for many years. In the unlikely event of conflict our political, geographical and industrial importance inevitably makes the United Kingdom a primary target. But there is no reason to suppose that the cruise missile peacetime bases at Greenham Common and Molesworth would be priority targets. The missiles would be moved from their bases to secret locations in times of tension to prevent the enemy being able to make a direct attack on them. These dispersal locations do not need any advance preparation since the only requirement is for a reasonably level piece of ground with some concealment against air attack. Cruise missiles can be moved from one site to another at frequent intervals. However the key point is that the presence of cruise missiles will strengthen deterrence and make a war less likely in the first place. Nuclear weapons have been based in the UK for more than 30 years with precisely this aim.

The only way to remove this threat is to remove the Soviet missiles themselves.

Q19. WHY HASN'T PARLIAMENT BEEN CONSULTED?

A19. You allege a lack of democratic involvement in the decision to site cruise missiles in the UK. Parliament has in fact been kept fully informed of the Government's policy on this issue. Mr Pym, who was then Defence Secretary, told the House of Commons on 13 December 1979 of NATO's 'double decision' to deploy cruise and Pershing II missiles from the end of 1983 and to offer the Russians negotiations to limit this class of weapon. In January 1980 he initiated the first debate on nuclear weapons in the House of Commons for 15 years. This debate covered the whole field of Britain's nuclear defence policy, including of course the prospect of the deployment here of cruise missiles, and in the vote at the end of the debate the Government's policy was clearly endorsed. Since then the House has on three major occasions debated nuclear defence issues, the latest debate being on 15 December 1982, which again focussed on the NATO 'double track' decision of December 1979. The issue has been raised in both Houses on a number of occasions, and there will no doubt continue to be many opportunities for Parliament to express itself on these matters. The general election on 9 June 1983 clearly demonstrated that the majority of the British public preferred the defence policies of the Government.

NATO's programme to deploy the new intermediate range missiles in Europe is of course not irreversible. It is to be spread over 5 years and could at any time be amended, stopped or reversed if agreement in the arms control negotiations warranted it. The choice therefore lies with the Russians, if they are prepared to negotiate seriously and in good faith about the missiles in question. But it is only because NATO has remained firm and united that the Russians have been brought to the negotiating table at all.

Q20. PRESIDENT REAGAN'S ZERO OPTION?

A20. The United States - on behalf of NATO and with the support of all the NATO Governments - has offered to cancel all plans for Pershing 2 and Cruise Missiles in Europe if the Russians will dismantle their similar missiles (the older generation of SS4s and SS5s and the notorious SS20s). This radical proposal to cut nuclear weapon levels is argueably the most important arms control offered since the SALT negotiations began. It would eliminate an entire class of nuclear weapons. Bilateral US/Soviet negotiations about these missiles opened in Geneva on 30 November 1981 and the fifth round began in May 1983.

While the zero option is far and away the best solution to improve East/West stability NATO has always said that it would consider any serious and fair proposal from the Russians. In the absence of agreement on the zero option NATO would be guided by the principle of seeking, across the negotiating table, balanced reductions for both sides.

Q21. MR ANDROPOV'S OFFER TO REDUCE SS20s?

A21. The Soviet Union is seeking to use the INF negotiations to prevent NATO modernisation without any meanful concessions on their part. The Russians original proposals (reduction to 300 of what they call "medium-range systems" on each side) would have left them with all their SS20 missiles but permitted NATO no installation of Cruise or Pershing II missiles to counter the Soviet threat. This is because the Soviet Union includes in its calculation of the balance the British and French independent strategic deterrents, as well as large numbers of US nuclear capable aircraft, while ignoring comparable systems on their side. In December 1982 Mr Andropov offered to reduce the numbers of SS20s in Europe - a step in the right direction if the Russians are finally acknowledging the special threat posed by SS20s, and an offer to be probed at the negotiations. But the offer is, like the original Russian proposals, conditional upon no installations of Cruise or Pershing II missiles by NATO and so would leave the Russians with a monopoly in this type of missile. Clearly this would not amount to fair or balanced arms control.

The Soviet claim that Soviet SS20s match the independent forces of Britain and France is no excuse. The British force is a submarine force, excluded from the negotiations by definition, just in the same way as US and Soviet submarines. These Strategic missiles are for a different purpose and are in no way comparable to the SS20s.

Q22. WHAT ABOUT STRATEGIC ARMS NEGOTIATIONS AND WHY AREN'T BRITISH FORCES INCLUDED?

A22. You ask why the British strategic nuclear deterrent is excluded from the current negotiations on nuclear arms control. The first point to make is that the British nuclear deterrent is very small in proportion to the forces of the superpowers. This will still be the case once Trident replaces Polaris. Our Polaris force of four submarines has a maximum 64 missiles. The same goes for Trident. This compares with the Soviet Union's 2,350 missiles of strategic range (to say nothing of almost 2000 Soviet nuclear missiles of lower ranges including over 350 SS20s). Secondly the British force of four submarines is the minimum required to provide an effective deployment: we could not reduce from this number. The small British deterrent is a weapon of last resort - the final guarantee of national sovereignty.

There are two negotiations on nuclear arms control in progress in Geneva at the moment. The Russians are now demanding that our sea-based strategic nuclear weapons should be taken into account in the negotiations on land-based Intermediate range Nuclear Forces (INF). This is a curious demand. The INF talks are specifically <u>not</u> about strategic weapons. British Polaris submarines (like Trident to come) can no more be part of INF negotiations than the American and Russian missile-firing submarines of comparable type. The reason for the Russians' demand is not hard to discover. Despite the fact that there are no NATO counterparts to their SS20 missiles targetted on Europe, they have been trying to claim that there is already a balance between the two sides' intermediate range weapons which NATO deployments would upset. To 'justify' this they make the claim that our strategic weapons are INF. This claim cannot be substantiated in fact. Britain's independent deterrent is a sea-based strategic weapon of last resort. It is different in character and purpose to that of INF. Furthermore the Russians themselves have recognised their status in the SALT I Agreement in which they added a unilateral footnote to the effect that

A22. Continued

they believed that the British and French nuclear deterrents should be counted in agreements as strategic weapons. There is a further important point. What the Russians are in effect demanding is that they should be allowed the same number of intermediate nuclear missiles as the rest of the nuclear powers together thus codifying a Soviet superiority over the United States. This would be quite wrong and damaging to East/West security. Furthermore it is difficult to see how any US administration (or Congress) could agree to it. The Soviet Union is seeking to demonstrate 'balance' to prevent NATO's INF deployment. Their aim is to deny the Alliance a capability it needs and weaken the coupling between the defence of Western Europe and that of the United States.

As for the other set of talks in Geneva - which are on strategic (inter-continental) nuclear missiles and bombers, the first priority is to reduce the huge Russian and American armouries. The Americans have made proposals which would reduce the number of intercontinental missiles by more than one half. These negotiations are of course bilateral between the Russians and the Americans and it would not only be wrong but it would be a distraction for them to seek to put limitations on British (or French) forces. But if the threat that Soviet forces posed to Britain were substantially reduced we would of course be prepared to review our position on arms control and the British deterrent. This point would seem to be a long way off; the first aim is to get agreement between the Americans and the Russians.

(See also Section VI - page 62)

Q23. ISN'T THE POSSESSION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS IMMORAL?

A23. The whole question of nuclear weapons raises grave and difficult ethical issues just as much for pacifists as for anyone else. The most central issue is whether it is morally wrong to threaten to use nuclear weapons in order to prevent others using them. The greater good is undoubtedly served by preventing nuclear war.

We accept of course that there is room for differing views about the morality of nuclear deterrence just as there have always been different views about the morality of war itself even in defence of justice and freedom. But in an imperfect world political responsibility often means choosing the least of several evils. The Government does not accept that it is immoral to retain nuclear weapons to prevent other using them against us. Since 1945 up to 10 million people have died in well over 100 wars by so-called conventional weapons. During that time there has been no war in Europe. We believe that stable nuclear deterrence remains the policy most likely to prevent the outbreak of war of <u>any</u> kind between East and West (including nuclear war). There is therefore a moral duty not to abandon that policy, except for one which makes the risks of war even less. We continue to strive for more lasting peace and justice in the world. Short of that goal, the Western Alliance remains the best guarantee of the values we seek to defend.

In addition, unilateral disarmament by Britain would not prevent others from using nuclear weapons against us; if it increased the risk of nuclear war, then many would argue that unilateral disarmament would be morally wrong itself. Nor is it likely to persuade any other nuclear weapon state to give up their weapons, or influence any non-nuclear weapon power determined to acquire a nuclear capability from doing so. What they do will be determined by regional security considerations - not by anything Britain does. Britain is working through the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons but should other countries acquire nuclear weapons in the future then that is hardly an argument for giving up ours.

A23. Continued

Speaking in November 1980, the Archbishop of Canterbury said that unilateral disarmament by Britain "might serve to destabilise a balance which has undoubtedly contributed to the peace of Europe for 35 years". At the recent Church of England General Synod debate on 'the Church and the Bomb' the Archbishop stated "Since I believe that the unilateralist approach would undermine disarmament negotiations in progress without exerting much exemplary influence, I cannot accept unilateralism as the best expression of a Christian's prime moral duty to be a peace maker".

(See also Section IV - Ethical Aspects)

Q24. THE NEUTRON BOMB IS A PARTICULARLY HORRIFIC WEAPON WHICH KILLS PEOPLE AND LEAVES PROPERTY INTACT. SURELY WE SHOULD HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH IT?

A24. The 'neutron bomb' which is more correctly known as the enhanced radiation weapon (ERW) differs from current nuclear warheads only in that a greater proportion of energy released is in the form of radiation, with correspondingly smaller effects from heat and blast. In other words, there is no difference in principle to nuclear weapons already deployed by both NATO and the Soviet Union. ERWs offer one way of deterring a massed armoured attack by the Warsaw Pact against Western Europe - they currently have an advantage over NATO in Central Europe of approaching three to one in main battle tanks. Of course, there are other ways - both nuclear and conventional - to deter such an attack, and the task of NATO is to find the most efficacious.

It is a gross distortion of the facts to claim that ERWs can destroy people but not property. The point is that they could knock out a Soviet tank attack on the territory of Western Europe without causing massive damage and civilian casualities nearby.

The US decision to proceed with the production of ERWs does not represent a change in the direction of US policy - indeed, when President Carter deferred a decision on the production of ERWs in 1978 he stated that his ultimate decision would be influenced by the degree to which the Soviet Union showed restraint in its own arms programmes, and his Administration continued the production and stockpiling of ERW components in advance of this.

No proposals have been made for the deployment of ERWs outside the United States, and the US Administration have made it clear that they will consult within the Alliance on any proposals of this kind.

Q25. WOULDN'T UNILATERAL DISARMAMENT BE THE FIRST STEP TOWARDS MULTILATERAL DISARMAMENT?

A25. One-sided nuclear disarmament is not a step towards multilateral disarmament; it is a step away from it. The one is the enemy of the other. For Britain to give up its nuclear weapons unilaterally would do nothing to reduce the dangers of war. Indeed by undermining NATO's ability to deter aggression it might make war more likely. There is no evidence to suggest that any other country would follow our example. In particular the Russians have made it clear that they would not give up their nuclear weapons. Britain is the only nuclear power in Europe which is committed to the common defence of NATO countries. We are an integral part of the balance of power within Europe. The Government would certainly like to see a world in which nuclear weapons for deterrence were not needed. Our approach however is to work towards a steady reduction in both conventional and nuclear armaments on both sides. The Soviet Union has made it clear that it will not disarm unilaterally; neither does it expect unilateral disarmament by the West.

(See also A27)

Q26. WHY DOES NATO NOT IMPLEMENT A BATTLEFIELD NUCLEAR WEAPON-FREE ZONE AS SUGGESTED BY THE PALME COMMISSION AND OTHERS?

A26. There are a number of difficulties with the Palme Commission's proposal of a 150km Battlefield Nuclear Weapon Free Zone (BNWFZ) in Central Europe.

Militarily a BNWFZ would be of little value, because targets inside it could still be attacked by accurate longer-range systems stationed outside it. Moreover, shorter range systems or warheads could easily be moved back into the zone in time of crisis. A BNWFZ would not, as it its proponents claim, raise the "nuclear threshold". This threshold would be determined by the strength of NATO's conventional defences.

Verification of a BNWFZ would be extremely difficult because the systems concerned are mobile and relatively small and because some are also "dual capable" - that is, aircraft and artillery which have nuclear roles as well as essential conventional ones. But without effective verification a BNWFZ could hardly be expected to build up mutual confidence: on the contrary an inadequately verifiable zone would only increase mutual suspicion.

NATO is concerned to maintain strong conventional forces in order to enhance deterrence and maintain the nuclear threshold as high as possible. That was the primary objective of the Long Term Defence Programme initiated in 1977. In addition NATO is currently reviewing the numbers and types of its short-range nuclear weapons to see if any changes are needed. The unilateral establishment of a BNWFZ by NATO would do nothing to enhance deterrence, would imply that the territory concerned was less important to NATO than other areas, and would not help current efforts in the Geneva negotiations to reduce (rather than redistribute) nuclear weapons.

Q27. WHY NOT TRY UNILATERALISM SINCE MULTILATERALISM HAS FAILED?

A27. Multilateral disarmament has not failed. It may be a slow process; but there have been important successess in the past. The Americans and Russians reached the important SALT I agreement in 1972 which for the first time fixed agreed ceilings on nuclear weapons. At the same time they agreed the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty which put an effective stop to any destabilising competition in strategic defensive systems. The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty of 1968 has been signed by well over a hundred countries and has limited the proliferation of nuclear weapons beyond the five existing nuclear weapon states. Between 1961 and 1979 the multilateral arms control process produced some 18 separate agreements on subjects such as nuclear testing, hot lines, reducing the risk of nuclear war by accident, arms control in outer space, on the seabed and in the Antarctic. There is of course much more to do, but these were all important steps along the road to greater international security and stability. Britain will continue to play an active part in these endeavours as we have all along. Now there are negotiations aimed at <u>reducing</u> not merely controlling nuclear weapons. In both the INF and START talks the Soviet Union has accepted the idea of reductions in its nuclear forces. The fact that the multilateral road is a difficult one is not an argument for abandoning it.

(See also A25)

Q28. WHAT ABOUT THE WARSAW PACT'S WIDE-RANGING DISARMAMENT INITIATIVES?

A28. The NATO Heads of Government issued a historic statement after their summit meeting in June 1982: the Bonn Declaration. In it they reaffirmed their policies on non-aggression, on the preservation of peace, on the relaxation of tension and the building of confidence in Europe, on the improvement of East/West relations, and on proposals for the balanced reduction of forces and weapons. They called on the Warsaw Pact to make a positive response.

In January 1983 the Eastern side responded with the Prague Declaration, issued after a Warsaw Pact meeting. This lists a number of measures which the Warsaw Pact has supported in the past: many of them were agreed by the United Nations in 1978 as desirable features of a long-term disarmament programme, and are under discussion in various arms control fora. Britain has welcomed the Prague Declaration as a possible indication of Eastern willingness to move towards the goals set by NATO in the Bonn Declaration.

An older proposal revived in the Prague Declaration is for a non-aggression pact between NATO and the Warsaw Pact. NATO has no difficulty about a commitment not to use force except in response to an attack. It made one at the Bonn summit in June 1982. We are willing to consider proposals for new agreements provided we can be convinced that these will strengthen rather than weaken existing obligations, eg the United Nations Charter and the Helsinki Final Act. But there is already a busy international arms control agenda which concentrates on priority areas: strategic and intermediate-range nuclear missiles, conventional forces, chemical weapons etc. So any new proposals must take their place in the queue. If substantial progress is made in key areas like START and INF, that would be the best incentive for considering what the next stage in negotiated arms control agreements should be. Meanwhile we shall have some questions to put to the Warsaw Pact. In particular we should wish to know whether the offer of non-aggression extends to countries outside the two alliances, like Afghanistan, or to members of the Warsaw Pact itself, like Poland.

Q29. IS NUCLEAR WAR BECOMING MORE LIKELY?

A29. Far from it. Since the Cuban missile crisis of 1962, there has never been an occasion when the use of nuclear weapons has been remotely likely. Deterrence is not an attractive way of keeping the peace, but it has worked. The ability of both sides to retaliate from invulnerable submarines, the agreements between West and East on preventing nuclear war by accident or miscalculation, the existence of a broad parity between the superpowers at the strategic level, and an awareness of the consequences of the use of nuclear weapons have all contributed to a lowering of the risk of nuclear war. In addition, the West has now made major proposals at the INF and START talks aimed at reducing the number of nuclear weapons held by both sides and further reducing the risk of war. These include:

i. substantial reductions in strategic ballistic missiles and warheads, with particular emphasis on the most destabilising weapons;

ii. eliminating the most threatening weapons in Europe (long-range INF missiles);

iii. strengthening East/West confidence building measures (eg extension of notification of test missiles firings).

The Soviet Union appears to have accepted the concept of reductions, and serious talks have begun aimed at preserving peace at lower levels of forces on both sides.

Q30. ISN'T THERE A DANGER THAT FAILURE OF WARNING SYSTEMS WILL PLUNGE US INTO ACCIDENTAL NUCLEAR WAR?

A30. All complex detection systems can produce ambiguous data, and early warning systems are no exception. However, highly trained personnel are constantly on watch to evaluate such data and cross checks would be made with other systems. Also, the decision to use nuclear weapons would have to be taken at the highest political level. They could never be used automatically in response to an early warning system alone.

There are agreements between the Governments of the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union (and between the United States and the USSR) specifically to prevent the outbreak of accidental nuclear war: there are also 'hot lines' for communication.

Neither the US nor the UK has a policy of launching nuclear weapons purely on early warning evidence, nor do we need any such policy; this is one of the many advantages of having strategic deterrent weapons at sea in submarines, which are virtually invulnerable to attack.

Q31. WILL NOT THE SHORT FLIGHT TIME OF THE PERSHING II MISSILE CAUSE THE SOVIET UNION TO ADOPT A LAUNCH ON WARNING POLICY?

A31. The flight time of the Pershing II - approximately 14 minutes (not the 6 minutes claimed by the Soviet Union) - is certainly short. But the flight times of the SS20s are of the same order. The shortness of flight time could be destabilishing if a "first strike" was a viable risk or if either side had a "launch-on-warning" policy. NATO has not adopted a "launch-on-warning" policy in response to Soviet deployments of SS20s since 1977; and there are no grounds for the Soviet Union doing so because of the much smaller planned deployments of Pershing II.

Q32. WHY NOT AGREE TO A FREEZE ON NUCLEAR WEAPONS?

A32. You advocate a freeze in nuclear weapons. A freeze would remove much of the incentive for the Soviet Union to agree to recent United States proposals, made at the START and INF talks in Geneva, for radical cuts in nuclear weapons levels. It is hard to imagine that the Soviet Union would have responded, in the START talks, with a proposal to cut the superpowers' strategic forces by 25% had they not been faced with the prospect of the United States' Trident and MX missile programmes. Similarly, it is unlikely that they will make any concessions in the INF negotiations unless they see that NATO is determined to proceed with its planned deployments of Pershing II and cruise missiles in Europe from late 1983. A nuclear freeze would also confirm the current imbalances, including the massive Soviet superiority in intermediate range nuclear forces.

A freeze would in any case be difficult and time consuming to negotiate, and difficult to verify. It would also divert effort away from the urgent and important task of seeking to negotiate <u>reductions</u> in the levels of nuclear forces of both sides (as is happening in talks in Geneva) rather than merely seeking to hold forces at <u>existing</u> levels.

Q33. SURELY THERE ARE ALREADY ENOUGH NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN THE WORLD TO PRESERVE THE PEACE?

A33. Peace is most likely to be maintained if there is a balance between East and West. We do not seek, nor need, to match the Soviet Union weapon for wseapon, but we do need to have a range of forces to deter a potential aggressor from action at any level. Otherwise he might believe that we would not have the capability or will to respond. The West has introduced very few nuclear weapons over the past decade; by contrast the Soviet Union has introduced large numbers of modern and accurate missiles (eg 750 ICBMs (SS17, 18, 19) and over 350 intermediate range SS20s). The West needs to modernise its forces so that they continue to be a credible deterrent, thus preventing war and keeping the peace.

There are indeed a great number of nuclear weapons in the world. We must continue to do all we can to reduce their number. But reductions must be made in a fair and balanced way. The focus here is inevitably on the USSR and the USA - the two superpowers - with their large arsenals. The US, with the full support of ourselves and our NATO allies, has made radical and imaginative proposals for reductions in nuclear forces in negotiations with the Soviet Union in Geneva:

- In strategic forces (START), a cut of one third in ballistic missile warheads, involving large reductions in the number of missiles themselves.

- In talks on nuclear weapons in Europe (INF); the zero option. This would completely eliminate an entire class of nuclear weapon (longer range land based missiles).

A33. Continued

In an effort to make progress in the INF talks, the US (with NATO's full support) has made clear that if the Zero Option is too radical for the Soviet Union, we are prepared to agree to equal numbers of missile warheads at as low a level as the Soviet Union will accept. NATO has already made it clear that, if no arms control agreement is reached and cruise and Pershing have to be deployed, one warhead will be withdrawn from the NATO stockpile for every new warhead that is deployed on Cruise and Pershing missiles.

On shorter range nuclear forces, the US has already removed 1000 nuclear warheads from Europe. This was announced in 1979 and completed in 1981. This led to no reciprocal action by the Soviet Union. NATO is now reviewing its holdings of these weapons in Europe, to see if further reductions can be made. The aim is to have no more weapons than are necessary for deterrence.

One final point. It is not true that more weapons make war more likely. They do not, because what matters is the existence on both sides of our assured second strike capability (invulnerable submarines). There are also agreements and hot lines to prevent accidental nuclear war. But none of this means that we should not do all we can to get the numbers of weapons down. NATO and the West is working hard to that end.

Q34. WHY DON'T WE SPEND MORE ON CIVIL DEFENCE?

A34. The whole purpose of the Government's defence policy is to prevent war. So long as the NATO Alliance maintains a strong deterrent, the risk of a war in Europe at any level will remain a remote possibility. The Soviet leadership know that if they used nuclear weapons against us they would be running a very grave risk of massive retaliation against Soviet territory. But should such an attack take place, even though the consequences would be appalling, there would still be millions of survivors. No one pretends that survival is possible near the centre of a nuclear explosion. But the further away you are, the better would be your chances of survival with some form of shelter and basic precautions. It is therefore the duty of any humane Government to make some provision for such an eventuality, however remote it might be. However, the Government do not believe that it is necessary to spend large sums on civil defence as long as we maintain our deterrent policies. The purpose of civil defence is to enable our civil resources to respond if peace is broken and there is an enemy attack. The amount of money we spend on it reflects this aim. The introduction of the new civil defence regulations will confer additional functions on local authorities. To meet these, the Government proposes to increase the area of local authority civil defence expenditure entitled to 100% grant aid (instead of 75% at present). Total expenditure on civil defence in 1983/84 will increase to about £67m.

Q35. HOW COULD ANYTHING BE DONE IF WE HAVE ONLY FOUR MINUTES WARNING?

A35. It is extremely unlikely that the first hint of Soviet aggression would be a few minutes warning from the Fylingdales Early Warning System. In such circumstances, it is true, we would have no time to activate our civil defence arrangements. But while a missile attack "out of the blue" is theoretically conceivable, the Soviet Union would have to calculate that Western response to such an attack might be massive retaliation by an invulnerable submarine-launched strategic missile. There is no likelihood that war could start without some sort of political crisis and at least a short warning period of some days during which Soviet military preparations were apparent. Such a warning period might well be followed by a conventional conflict lasting for some days, possibly weeks, before the war either stopped or escalated to some level of nuclear exchange. During all this time the Government would be implementing its plans for advice to, and protection of, the public, for the continuation of essential services, and for the continuity of organised government. If, during a period of conventional war, the Soviet Union attacked us with missiles, people would be prepared and ready to take the immediate self protective action necessary in response to broadcast public announcements and the sounding of the attack sirens.

Q36. BUT WHY NOT BUILD MORE SHELTERS?

A36. Successive Governments have accepted that the low risk of war in Europe balanced against the enormous cost (billions of pounds) does not justify a programme of purpose-built shelters. Our civil defence policy represents an insurance policy against such a risk, which will remain remote provided we maintain our policy of deterrence. Our major Allies follow a similar policy, including the United States, the Federal Republic of Germany and Italy. However, we are by no means complacent and within the inevitable financial constraints ways of improving our arrangements are constantly under review. In particular we intend that local authorities should conduct a survey of their areas to identify existing structures suitable for adaptation in crisis as communal shelters for the public.

Q37. SURELY THE ARRANGEMENTS MERELY ENSURE THE SURVIVAL OF A GOVERNING AND MILITARY ELITE?

A37. Certainly not. Senior Ministers, officials and Service officers would remain in London should a war break out. The Ministers and staffs of decentralised or regional government in emergency headquarters are essentially reserves in the event of a nuclear attack on Central London. The Armed Forces have similar arrangements. The aim would be for local authorities to continue to provide essential services, and for a form of regional government until central control could be resumed. But control would remain firmly in civilian hands and law and order would be administered under regulations approved by Parliament before an attack took place. The whole purpose of the surviving administrations would be to help the survivors by providing emergency services and information.

Q38. WHAT WILL THE GOVERNMENT DO IF LOCAL AUTHORITIES REFUSE TO CO-OPERATE IN CIVIL DEFENCE PLANNING?

A38. The Government is confident that the gret majority of local authorities will continue to discharge their statutory obligations. The new civil defence regulations will confer additional functions on them to make provision in peacetime for the protection of the public and the continuation of essential services in war and to participate in civil defence activities. The Government hopes that, in a matter so closely related to the nation's vital defence interest, of which the Government is elected to be the judge, local authorities will wish to follow the policy determined by central government and make use of the additional resources which central government has decided to allocate to local civil defence planning.

## IV - THE ETHICAL ASPECTS

The following is the text of an address given by the then Secretary of State for Defence, Sir John Nott, on the morality of Trident, in November 1982.

---

What are the realities which from the basis upon which a moral decision on our deterrent must rest?

There are three, namely war, weapons and warlike Governments. First war. I do not intend to debate whether war is a natural condition for man, though I certainly do not believe that it is an integral part of God's purpose for man. But, at a time when 30-40 wars or lesser conflicts are in progress throughout the world, I cannot avoid the conclusion that wars do happen and will doubtless continue to happen unless effective steps are taken to prevent them.

Second, weapons. In the last world war - which was for the most part a European war - some 50 million people were killed, the majority civilians. That was with conventional weapons. What by modern standards were rather primitive conventional weapons, with much less destructive power than those we possess today.

The reality in the case of nuclear weapons - a truism but one worth repeating - is that they inescapably exist and we have to live with that fact. Even if every weapon were dismantled tomorrow, the knowledge of how to make them will be with man for the rest of his time on earth.

The third reality is the existence of warlike Governments. I have never claimed that the Soviet Union is seeking war with the West. I do not doubt that the people of the Soviet Union are as concerned as all of us to avoid a war with NATO. But it is clear from recent history that the Russian

leadership will use military force when it thinks it can get away with it. And a country's behaviour when faced with the prospect that its aggression will meet an effective and determined response - the position today - is no guide to how it would behave in completely different circumstances. So we cannot deduce from the absence of war in Western Europe that Soviet intentions are fundamentally benign - I only wish that the world was that simple.

So these are the realities upon which any moral discussion must be founded. The reality of war, the reality that weapons of mass destruction - including nuclear weapons - exist, and the reality that some Governments are apparently prepared to pursue their ideologies by warlike means.

Let me then pose a few questions - without answering them. The argument is often advanced that since nuclear weapons have the power to destroy on a greater scale than conventional weapons, they are in some way more evil. The argument has considerable emotional appeal but is it valid? The danger of a single nuclear release certainly involves the danger of escalation right up the scale to a strategic conflict, but there is no certain reason why the release of a nuclear weapon should actually kill or maim more people than a conventional war in which 50 million die and many millions more are maimed. Where is the moral issue here?

There is a variant of this "moral" argument put forward against nuclear weapons. It is that they can only be weapons of mass destruction, targetted against cities, whereas conventional weapons are targetted against military concentrations. But is this true? The Second World War was a total war - from the fire bombing of cities to the horrors of the concentration camps.

Modern nuclear weapons possess an accuracy which would actually permit their use against military concentrations - that is not an argument for "war fighting" ie using them in such a role. It is a statement of fact. Would it

be less immoral to fire bomb a city with conventional weapons - or to attack a military concentration with nuclear weapons? Is there a moral answer to this question?

Even to pose such questions means of course that some people may misrepresent the argument and accuse me of advocating the use of nuclear weapons. I do no such thing. I merely pose the moral dilemmas inherent in these issues - which are seldom considered because of the understandable moral repugnance for nuclear weapons.

And another question - for historical reasons the United States and Britain happen to provide nuclear deterrence on behalf of the Alliance as a whole. Is it moral to forego our own nuclear weapons to shelter under those of another Ally? It certainly might provide some comfort to the conscience. But remember we start from a position as a nuclear power - not a non-nuclear or a neutral one - and we have to weigh both the consequences of change and where it leaves us. We might also take account ofthe views of our Allies who at this year's NATO meeting supported the determination of the United States and the United Kingdom to ensure the deterrent capabilities of their strategic nuclear forces.

Is it seriously suggested that if we give up our weapons, the West would remain as secure as it is today? Would not it make war more likely? I think so. If so, why should it be a morally defensible act?

So I come to some more practical questions! Do I think the United Kingdom can be properly defended against nuclear powers over future generations, without a nuclear deterrent - and my answer is No. It may be a simple view - but I hold it.

In his address the other day the Bishop of London made the point that no Government can abdicate their responsibility to ensure the survival of the state, preserve the lives of their citizens and provide a framework for the exercise of human dignity in the pursuit of a Christian life. As Secretary of State for Defence, my task is to defend the British people. And defend them against the only real threat to our way of life and to our independence as a sovereign nation - a threat which comes from a nuclear power. The Soviet Union unquestionably possesses nuclear weapons, its armoury is huge and, like it or not, no Government can exercise its duty to the British people unless it considers these difficult problems in the context of power in the real world.

I cannot close my eyes to the realities of the world in the late 20th Century. I cannot be satisfied with a policy that might be adequate for the conscience of a private citizen. I cannot, as an extreme example, adopt a pacifist approach and rely on the good will of others - or be prepared to suffer the consequences for myself, because those consequences, in my case as a Government Minister, would fall not only on me, but on every citizen in these islands. I do not question the moral integrity of the genuine pacifist, but pacifism is not a morally responsible position for a politician, much less one charged with the defence of his people.

In my judgement it would certainly be immoral to contemplate the first use of strategic nuclear weapons in order to make a pre-emptive strike or in support of aggression generally. But the conditional threat of their use in response to aggression is an entirely different question. If by the credible threat of a nuclear response we successfully deter war, then I believe that the good that comes from this must exceed the risks in spite of the moral complexities involved.

This is why the possession of nuclear weapons of a kind like Trident which possess what is known as a second strike capability, seems to me to be grounded on an ethical basis. The whole rationale behind the need for Trident is that it is itself invulnerable to first attack. In the perception of our enemies it is a system which cannot be destroyed in a pre-emptive strike by them. It is within their knowledge that should they ever deliver a conventional or nuclear attack upon the North Atlantic Alliance the choice, I emphasise the choice, for retaliation would still rest in the hands of the British Government. And that choice - by a second centre of decision making within the Alliance - adds immeassurably to nuclear deterence, which is an essential part of NATO strategy given the awesome armoury of nuclear weapons now possessed by the Soviet Union.

Is then the sheer cost of Trident immoral? Either because it is a mal-distribution of resources and we would be better advised to place an equivalent sum in conventional weapons (although that seems to me to be a practical defence question, not a moral one); or should we be spending the money on something else, helping the poor, or education?

First should we be spending the money on conventional defence instead? Would this be a more effective use of defence resources? After all an extra £400M a year or so for 18 years (out of the annual defence budget of £15,000M) would buy quite a lot of conventional defence - for example about two extra armoured divisions with 300 additional tanks for BAOR. Another two armoured Divisions would of course add to NATO's conventional capability, although in the context of the massive Warsaw Pact tank superiority the effect of this enhancement would be small.

I do not believe that any equivalent spending on conventional weapons and forces could possibly be of the same value in preventing war. We must never forget that deterrence is a matter of perception. What is important is not what we think, but what the other side may think.

If you were sitting in Moscow, would you be more deterred by 300 tanks than by Trident? Of course not. How could we actually resist the threat to destroy one of our cities if the other side knew we did not possess a capability to hit one of his cities or one of his military installations in return. The extra tanks would not help. In his perception we would have no credible response if he sought to blackmail us into surrender.

Next, is there not a cheaper deterrent than Trident such as Cruise missiles?

Of course it is possible to think of cheaper alternatives. But the risks are usually not spelled out. A system which the other side sees as having little or no chance of reaching targets of importance to him poses no deterrent threat - it is simply a waste of money. A system which was vulnerable to pre-emption on the other hand would be a positive menance - it would invite the very nuclear attack on this country which our strategic nuclear deterrent is intended to prevent.

Second, and the more difficult question, should we be spending this money on something else say on social welfare or education or other programmes at home or abroad? In times of economic difficulty it is always difficult to justify expenditure on defence, but we must not forget that ultimately it is only by ensuring our security that we can choose our own social welfare and other programmes. The Government's first responsibility is the security of the nation. Of course we have to weigh the consequences of spending on defence against spending in other fields. But we also have to weigh the consequences of not spending enough on defence against the heavy costs in lives and freedom which we might later incur. Peace is expensive - but it is never as expensive as war. We have discovered that simple truth quite recently.

Trident in fact will represent a very small proportion of the defence budget, about 3%. Defence is in turn some 12% of total Government expenditure. If resources have to be found for other programmes, there is no reason why we should look first at Trident: it is not at the margin of the defence programme or the Government's programme as a whole. It is at the heart of our future security.

We must finally consider what failure to replace Polaris with Trident could entail for ourselves and Europe. Such a unilateral act of disarmament - for it would be no less than this - is unlikely to lead to any reciprocal act which would reduce the threat to us. Rather, as the Archbishop of Canterbury has said, it might serve to destabilise a balance which has undoubtedly contributed to the peace in Europe for 35 years. There is no evidence that the Soviet Union - or any other country - is influenced by unilateral moral gestures - particularly of a sort which could be perceived as showing weakness and a lack of resolve. Countries, for better or worse, operate on the basis of a calculation of their interests.

I believe then, that despite all the difficulties it presents for us, the decision on Trident is necessary and morally correct, because it will contribute to deterrence and make a major war - whether nuclear or conventional - significantly less likely. At the same time, the moral dilemma surrounding deterrence cannot be dismissed. We cannot be satisfied with threatening mutual destruction for the rest of time. Deterrence is, as I have said, reliable but nothing human is infallible. We must seek a better means of assuring peace. But we cannot pretend that such a means is already within our grasp or that it will be easy to find.

As a first step what we can do is help to stabilise deterrence at lower levels of forces on both sides. We can maintain and indeed enhance our security with fewer and more stable weapons on both sides. These current negotiations are seeking arms reductions and not just, as in the past, arms control - this is I believe a major advance.

I know that all of those who oppose Trident support this objective. But I do not understand how - in the light of past experience - they expect that it will be brought about by a one-sided lowering of our guard. I hope that the unilaterial disarmers have thought through the moral responsibility which they might bear for their actions. I believe unilateral disarmament by Britain would not only reduce our security but would seriously undermine the achievement of multilateral nuclear weapons reductions on all sides. Why should the Soviets reduce their armoury if they can achieve their objectives through the so-called peace movements of the West?

I will take my concluding words from the Pope's message to the Second United Nations Special Session on Disarmament, in June this year.

> "In current conditions, deterrence based on balance, certainly not as an end in itself, but as a step twoards progressive disarmament, may still be judged morally acceptable. I reaffirm my confidence in the power of true negotiations to arrive at just and equitable solutions. Such negotiations demand patience and diligence and must notably lead to a reduction of armaments that is balanced, simultaneous and internationally controlled".

I fully endorse this message, and I would commend it to you all.

## V - THE BALANCE OF NUCLEAR FORCES - END 1982

It is difficult to make a simple comparison between the nuclear forces of NATO and the Warsaw Pact. Any numerical "balance" cannot take account of such factors as age, operational capability, and numbers and yields of warheads. Comparisons of warhead numbers are particularly difficult since many delivery systems can carry different numbers of warheads and neither side publishes figures about the total number of warheads in its stockpiles.

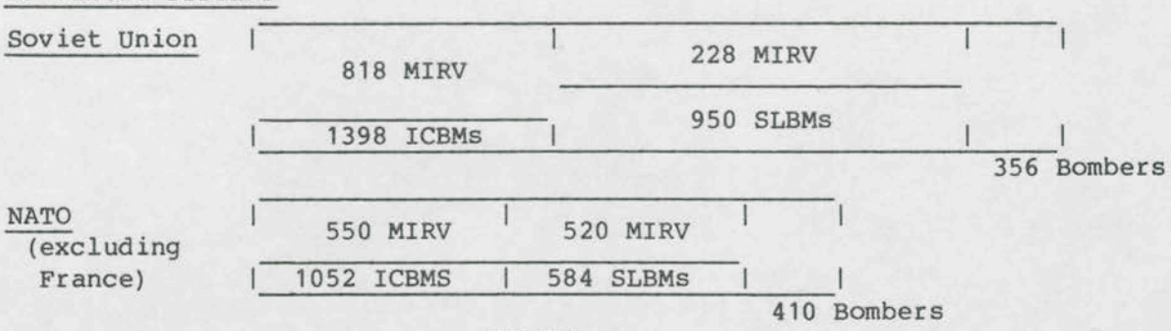
Moreover since there is plainly little sense in attaching the same weight to an inter-continental ballistic missile and a short-range howitzer, any attempt to draw up a nuclear balance must involve placing the systems into various categories, and these necessarily must to some extent be arbitrary. Overleaf is a diagram showing the total number of systems deployed at the end of 1982, broken down in strategic systems (eg those defined as such in the SALT agreements) and longer and shorter range intermediate nuclear forces (INF) and short range systems based in Europe. Although the presentation of the figures can be varied, it can be seen that the Soviet Union has a marked superiority both in the total number of systems and in almost every individual category.

Despite this the Russians have claimed that a broad parity already exists in "medium range" systems, and that NATO will be upsetting this balance by its programme to modernise its longer-range INF systems. However the figures they have produced to support this claim make it clear that their balance has been constructed by selective inclusion and exclusion of systems on either side. Thus they include NATO strategic systems (eg Polaris) but not Soviet equivalents; US aircraft based in the United States but not Soviet aircraft based in the Far East; NATO aircraft (F4, A6, A7) but not equivalent Soviet aircraft (Fitter, Flogger, Fencer). Although it is possible to argue about where the line should be drawn, any objective balance must include systems of approximately equivalent capability on both sides. If only the longer range INF land based systems on both sides are counted, the Soviet Union has a superiority of about 5:1. If shorter range INF systems are added to the comparison, the ratio is more than 3:1.

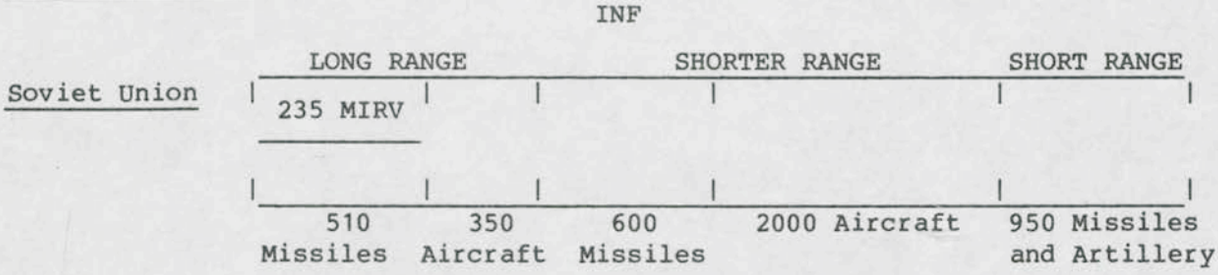
It is also worth noting that the Soviet Union first made the claim that parity exists in 1979. Although since then they have withdrawn about 175 of their older SS4 and SS5 missiles, each with one warhead, they have deployed more than 200 of their new and formidable SS20s, each with three warheads - an overall increase of about 500 warheads. A total of over 300 SS20s is now in service. Meanwhile NATO has not made any increases in its own systems, so, if there was party in 1979, it cannot exist now. Additionally the Soviet claims about the NATO modernisation programme ignore the fact that the US unilaterally withdrew 1,000 warheads from its European stockpile in 1980/81; that Pershing II will replace Pershing I on a one-for-one basis; and that NATO will withdraw a further warhead as each new cruise missile is deployed. Moreover the first of the new NATO missiles will not be deployed until the end of 1983; by which time well over 350 SS20s can be expected to have been deployed.

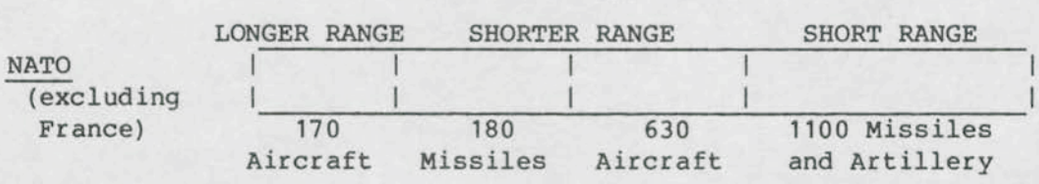
## THE BALANCE OF NUCLEAR FORCES - END 1982 (1)(2)

### STRATEGIC SYSTEMS (3)




### EUROPEAN SYSTEMS (Land Based) (4)(5)




NOTES: ICBM = Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles.
SLBM = Submarine Launched Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles.
MIRV = Multiple Independently Targettable Re-entry Vehicles.

(1) French systems are not included in this diagram. They comprise 64 SLBM, 36 Mirage IV bombers, 18 S3 missiles and shorter range Mirage IIIA and Jaguar aircraft and Pluton missiles.

(2) THe diagram does not include defensive systems such as ABM or air defence missiles and aircraft.

(3) The diagram of strategic forces covers operational strategic delivery systems of the types defined in SALT as well as Soviet Backfire and US FB111 bombers which have intercontinental capabilities.

(4) The European figures do not include some 250 aircraft of the Soviet Naval Air Forces or some 20 aircraft of NATO Air Forces which have an antiship capability; nor do they include sea-based nuclear capable systems on both sides which are normally deployed in the European theatre and which have a land attack capability, eg 18 SS-N-5 on Soviet Golf class submarines in the Baltic and 20 A6 and 48 A7 aircraft on US carriers in the Mediterranean.

(5) It is difficult to define precisely the exact ranges of many INF systems particularly aircraft. These categories are therefore necessarily somewhat arbitrary. For the purpose of this diagram longer range INF systems have been taken as those with an approximate range exceeding 1000 kms; shorter range INF as those with an approximate range between 150 kms and 1000 kms; and short range forces as less than 150 kms. (Note: some authorities refer to LRINF as medium range systems to distinguish them from the longer range strategic systems.)

## VI - EXCLUSION OF BRITISH STRATEGIC DETERRENT FROM DISARMAMENT NEGOTIATIONS

### A. The British Strategic Deterrent Force

1. There has been an independent British nuclear deterrent since 1955. It is and has always been a weapon of last resort. Since the late 1960s the deterrent has been provided by a small force of four submarines armed with Polaris missiles; this allows Britain to keep one submarine on patrol at all times. We have the minimum number of submarines; we cannot reduce that number.

2. Polaris is a strategic deterrent. It is of the same character as the US and Soviet strategic systems covered by the SALT agreement. The Soviet Union has accepted publicly during the SALT I negotiations that Polaris is a strategic system. All French nuclear missiles also have a strategic role.

### B. Polaris and the INF Talks

3. Intermediate range nuclear force reduction (INF) talks in Geneva are - as their name indicates - about intermediate range land-based nuclear systems, not strategic systems. It would be illogical and in-appropriate to take account of Polaris (which is strategic and sea-based) in the INF forum. All the NATO allies agree that Polaris should not be included.

4. The Soviet Union wants to include Polaris in the INF talks:

   a. As a negotiating gambit designed to divide the NATO allies and prevent deployment of cruise and pershing II and

b. Because the inclusion of British and French forces is critical to Soviet claims that a nuclear balance exists in Europe at the intermediate level.

This last claim is false. There is a massive Soviet superiority over NATO in Europe (about 5:1) in intermediate range missiles and aircraft. Since 1979 the number of SS20s deployed (each with 3 warheads) has trebled to a total of 351, whilst NATO has not increased its forces. The number of comparable NATO missiles remains the same - zero. Yet the Soviet Union still claims that a balance exists.

5. Further, both the Russians and Americans both have considerable numbers of strategic nuclear weapons, which are specifically excluded from the INF talks; there is no logical reason why British and French strategic systems should be included.

C. Polaris and the START Talks

6. Some people argue that Polaris should be considered in the Strategic arms reduction talks (START) also being held in Geneva. In fact:

a. The START talks, as with the SALT talks before them, were begun and are being conducted by the US and Soviet Union. They are bilateral talks between the superpowers, in which they are discussing their own strategic systems.

b. The US and Soviet Union are rightly concerned to secure reductions in their own strategic nuclear arsenals.

c. In SALT talks in the 1970s the Russians accepted that British and French forces should not be included. There is no reason why they should take a different view now.

D. Polaris and Arms Control

7. The British Government has made clear that they are very anxious to see balanced reductions between the superpowers in all nuclear weapons. If the threat posed to this country by the extensive Soviet forces is significantly lessened the Government has said that it will look again at the position of Polaris. But that time has not yet arrived and the issue must be kept in perspective. The British strategic force is a very small proportion (less than 3%) of the equivalent forces of the Soviet Union. Our first priority must continue to be to play our full part in NATO's objective of fair and balanced arms control measures which would increase all-round security.

## VII - GOVERNMENT MATERIAL ON NUCLEAR POLICY ISSUES

Copies of MOD and FCO brochures are available on request. The following list describes some of them briefly.

### MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

DEFENCE FACT SHEET 1 - ARMS CONTROL AND DISARMAMENT

DEFENCE FACT SHEET 2 - NATO

DEFENCE FACT SHEET 3 - DETERRENCE

DEFENCE FACT SHEET 4 - THE NUCLEAR BALANCE

The Defence Fact Sheets are designed for background information, rather than 'handout material'.

'NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND PREVENTING WAR' Essay on the deterrent philosophy which was first published in the Statement on Defence Estimates 1981.

'A NUCLEAR FREE EUROPE - Why it wouldn't work' This explains the fallacy of the European nuclear free zone proposal and includes a map showing how Russian SS20s can strike at the whole of Europe from behind the Ural Mountains.

'CRUISE MISSILES - Some Important Questions and Answers' covers the reasons behind the 1979 double decision on INF modernisation and arms control, and issues such as whether Britain has become more of a target, cost and control.

'ARMS CONTROL AND SECURITY' - Essay reprinted from the Statement on Defence Estimates 1982 explaining the Government's attitude to arms control and disarmament.

'NUCLEAR DEFENCE: KEY POINTS' - Aide Memoire for speakers.

'THE FUTURE UNITED KINGDOM STRATEGIC NUCLEAR DETERRENT FORCE' Defence Open Government Document 80/23 July 1980. A memorandum setting out the rationale for an independent strategic deterrent and the reason for choosing Trident to replace Polaris. An additional Open Government Document 82/1 'THE UNITED KINGDOM TRIDENT PROGRAMME', dealing with the decision to purchase the Trident II D5 system, was published in March 1982.

Copies of the above material can be obtained from

Ministry of Defence (DS 17)
Room 9156
Main Building
Whitehall SW1 2HB
Tel: 01-218-6016

A Film entitled 'The Peace Game' explaining how the West has kept the peace is available to clubs, groups, etc from:

Central Film Library
Central Office of Information
Chalfont Grove
Gerrards Cross
Bucks SL9 8TN
Tel: Chalfont St Giles (02407) 4111

The Peace Game is ideal for use with a speaker; as a centre-piece for a group discussion; or for watching without any accompaniment. However used, it will offer a sensible view of a topic often clouded by rhetoric and confusion.

The Peace Game is offered free to borrowers. It is 24 minutes long and available on 16mm film and videocassette systems VHS, Betamax, Philips 2000 and Sony U-matic.

A short audio-visual presentation on the deterrence strategy entitled 'A Better Road to Peace' is available from the same source.

FOREIGN & COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

Arms Control and Disarmament (Quarterly) - Review of Developments in the various negotiations
Peace and Disarmament - a short guide to the arms control negotiations
The Nuclear Debate - sets out the two schools of thought (unilateralism and multilateralism)
Britain and Arms Control - Summary of proposals supported by the UK.

Copies of the above brochures, and further information on arms control and disarmament can be obtained from:

Arms Control and Disarmament Research Unit
Foreign and Commonwealth Office
Downing Street (East)
SW1
Tel: 01-233-3907

HOME OFFICE

Civil Defence is the responsibility of the Home Office and Scottish Home and Health Department. Copies of official background material on civil defence including a free pamphlet "Civil Defence - why we need it" can be obtained from:

Emergency Services (F6) Division
Home Office
50 Queen Anne's Gate
SW1H 9AT
Tel: 01-213-4018