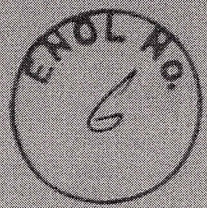
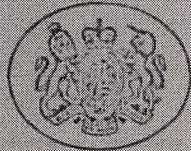


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24/5/78

Secretary/VCNS
ACNS(P)
DNP
DPR(N)

THE NUCLEAR DETERRENT

You may be interested to see the attached extract from Hansard if you have not already done so, particularly the last paragraph. I have tipped off COS/CinC Fleet so that he may consider sending a suitable message to CTF 345.

Secretary/First Sea Lord
25th May 1978

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Page 9 of 15 pages

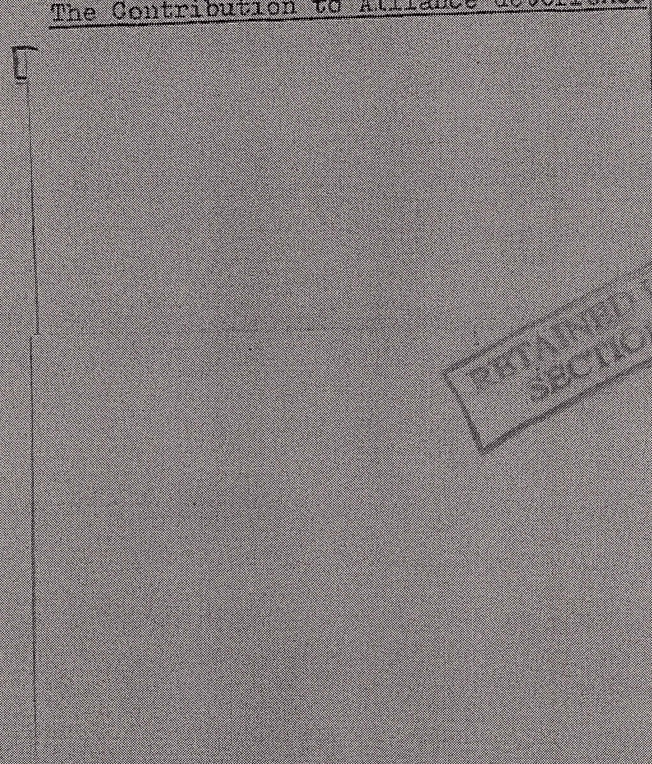
involved in any even limited conflict in Europe. 7

THE PURPOSES SERVED BY A UK STRATEGIC DETERRENT

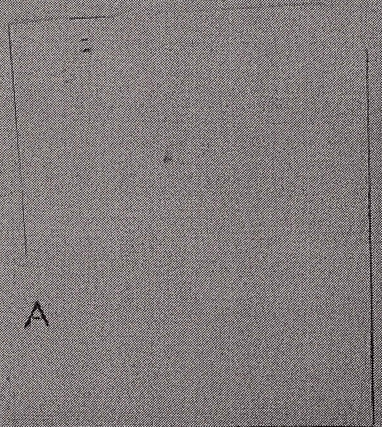
11. Against this background four interrelated purposes can be identified which might be served by a UK strategic nuclear capability:

- a. *meritarily* a contribution to NATO's strategic deterrent;
- b. a trigger for the US deterrent; *U*
- c. a last resort capability if Alliance deterrence fails or the Alliance has ceased to exist;
- d. political influence and prestige.

The Contribution to Alliance deterrence



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SECTION 10



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Page 10 of 15 pages

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13. A UK strategic force may, however, also contribute to Alliance deterrence in a different way, by complicating the calculations which an aggressor must make when contemplating an attack. He now has to consider the likely reactions of at least two powers in different geographical positions and whose interests may be engaged to varying degrees in ^{the} a dispute. The additional uncertainty as to the response he may face adds to the risks involved and may therefore aid deterrence. [can we say anything in support of this argument about Russian attitudes to independent deterrents?]

A trigger for the US Deterrent

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14. The trigger argument is in one sense the mirror image of the argument of additional certainty: one focuses on the effect of a national capability on a superpower ally, the other on the effect of the enemy. The trigger argument can be easily decided

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