

## Deterrence

# Further Reading

Introduction by Dr David Jordan

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**T**he historiography of the Cold War, and especially the nuclear weapons component of the confrontation, understandably concentrates on the US-Soviet angle. Consequently, as this edition of *Air Power Review* illustrates, the significant contribution played by the UK's nuclear forces (including the Cuban Missile Crisis, which involved a significant British aspect) and has been somewhat under-represented in the history books. When the entirely understandable concern over security of this most sensitive element of Britain's Cold War defences is added to the mix, it is not unfair to say that the coverage of Britain's nuclear deterrent forces during the Cold War can be rather downplayed. This edition of *Air Power Review* has sought to contribute a collection of articles in addition to the Institute for Contemporary British History's witness seminar transcript to further draw out key aspects of Cold War deterrence and Britain's part in it.

In a bid to give an insight into the array of literature available to help illuminate Britain's role as a nuclear power, the following bibliography has been constructed. It is not exhaustive, but an exemplar of some of the best material available on the subject. It covers works addressing the conceptual underpinnings of deterrence – such as the 'classics' by Bernard Brodie, Thomas C Schelling and Sir John Slessor – as well as those which examine the part played by Britain as a nuclear power. The works suggested cover everything from Britain's decision to acquire atomic weapons of its own, through studies of the deterrent made real ( first in the V-Force era), which saw aerial delivery as the means through which deterrence was provided, and then into more recent times with CASD provided first by submarine-launched Polaris and latterly Trident missiles.

As ever with air power, much of the bibliographic coverage of the V-Force seems to be dominated by a fascination with the aircraft used, rather than on the more important aspects concerned with their intended role, but there are some useful studies, as noted below. Also, the fact that there was a nuclear weapons capability provided by other parts of the RAF can be overlooked. Again, those interested in the RAF's role in nuclear deterrence both at the time of Cuba and beyond are likely to find more to satisfy their curiosity in books and articles dealing with the aircraft which provided the capability than in any detailed analysis of the nuclear QRA role. There are still gaps, since the picture of the RAF in the nuclear era – with a significant

element of capability being provided by tactical aircraft<sup>1</sup> – remains less clear than is ideal for students of air power. In part, this results from concerns over security, as can be demonstrated by the tantalizing files on the subject which might one day be released to historians at the National Archives.

The sources below represent an introduction for further study into nuclear deterrence and, particularly, Britain's approach to possessing a deterrent capability, closely aligned with, but operationally independent of, the USA. They present a clear picture of an era in which nuclear war was an ever-present possibility, with both sides perhaps deterred only from what the former Deputy Secretary to the Cabinet, Sir Michael Cary, referred to as a 'nightmarish gavotte' by the fear of reprisal and the inevitability of catastrophe if ever deterrence failed.<sup>2</sup>

### Notes

<sup>1</sup> Starting with the English Electric Canberra, and followed by types such as the Vulcan (in a more tactically-focused role), Buccaneers, Phantoms and Jaguars before the Britain's airborne nuclear era ended with RAF Tornado GR1 squadrons holding nuclear QRA.

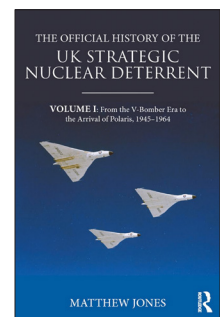
<sup>2</sup> Sir Michael Cary (1917-76), Deputy Secretary to the Cabinet (1961-63); Chief Executive, MOD Procurement Executive (1972-74); Permanent Undersecretary of State for Defence (1974-76); Peter Hennessy, *The Secret State* (Penguin Books, 2003, p.124).

### Official Histories:

#### The Official History of the UK Strategic Nuclear Deterrent: Volume I: From the V-Bomber Era to the Arrival of Polaris, 1945-1964

Matthew Jones

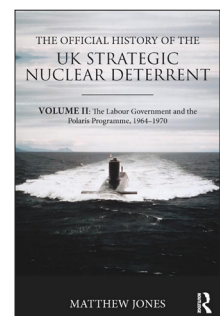
(Abingdon: Routledge, 2017)



#### The Official History of the UK Strategic Nuclear Deterrent: Volume II: The Labour Government and the Polaris Programme, 1964-1970

Matthew Jones

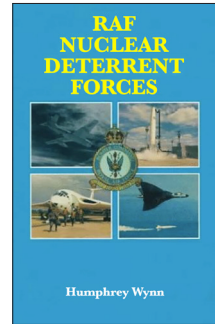
(Abingdon: Routledge, 2017)



***The RAF strategic nuclear deterrent forces: their origins, roles and deployment, 1946-1969: a documentary history***

Humphrey Wynn

(HMSO, 1994)



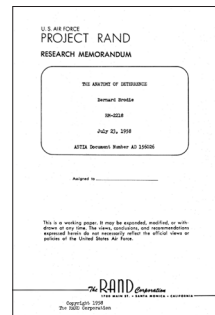
**Strategy & Theories of Deterrence:**

**The Anatomy of Deterrence**

Bernard Brodie

(Santa Monica: RAND, 1958)

[https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research\\_memoranda/2008/RM2218.pdf](https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_memoranda/2008/RM2218.pdf)

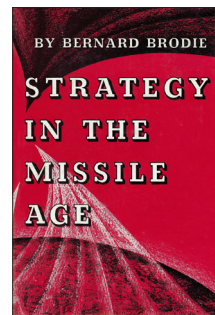


**Strategy in the Missile Age**

Bernard Brodie

(RAND, 1959)

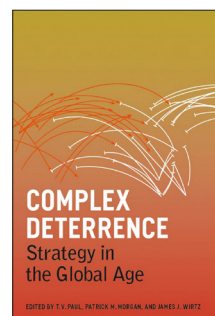
[http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/commercial\\_books/2007/RAND\\_CB137-1.pdf](http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/commercial_books/2007/RAND_CB137-1.pdf)



**Complex Deterrence**

TV Paul, Patrick Morgan

(University of Chicago Press, 2009)

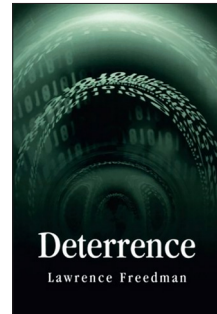


### Deterrence

Lawrence Freedman

(Themes for the 21st Century)

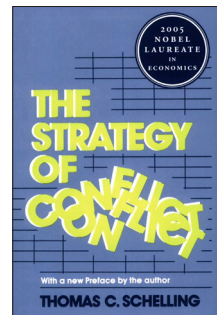
(Polity Press, 2004)



### The Strategy of Conflict

Thomas Schelling

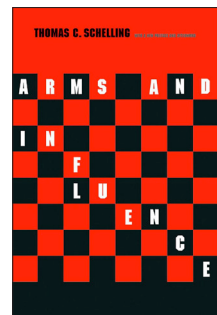
(Harvard University Press, 1960)



### Arms and Influence

Thomas Schelling

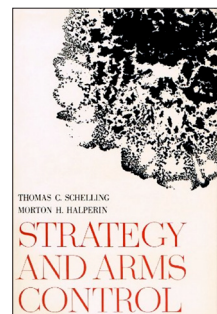
(Yale University Press, 1966)



### Strategy and Arms Control

Thomas Schelling & Morton H Halperin

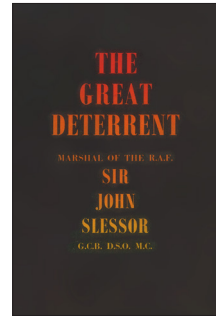
(Twentieth Century Fund, 1961)



### **The Great Deterrent**

MRAF Sir John Slessor

(Cassell, 1956)

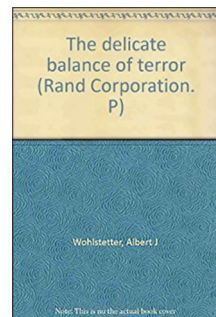


### **The Delicate Balance of Terror**

Albert Wohlstetter

(RAND, 1958)

<http://www.rand.org/about/history/wohlstetter/P1472/P1472.html>

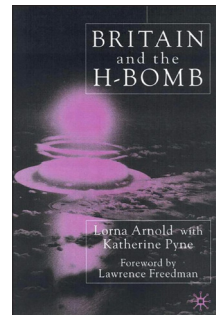


### **Britain, The Cold War and Nuclear Weapons:**

#### **Britain and the H-bomb**

Lorna Arnold

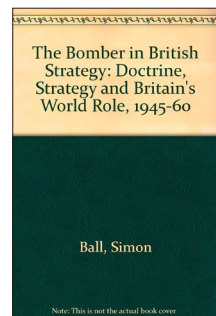
(Palgrave, 2001)



#### **The Bomber in British Strategy: Doctrine, Strategy and Britain's World Role, 1945-60**

Simon Ball

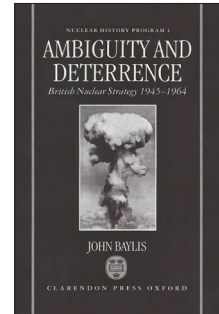
(Westview Press, 1995)



**Ambiguity and Deterrence: British Nuclear Strategy 1945-1964**

John Baylis

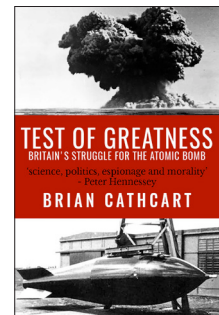
(Clarendon Press, 1994)



**Test of Greatness: Britain's Struggle for the Atom Bomb**

Brian Cathcart

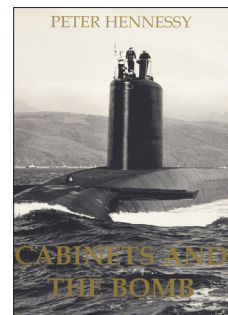
(John Murray, 1994)



**Cabinets and the Bomb**

Peter Hennessy

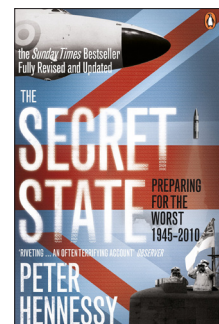
(OUP, 2007)



**The Secret State 2nd edition**

Peter Hennessy

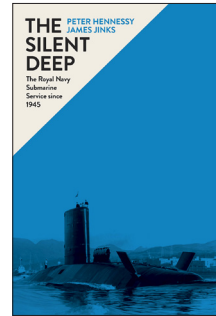
(Penguin, 2010)



## The Silent Deep: The Royal Navy Submarine Service since 1945

Peter Hennessy & James Jinks

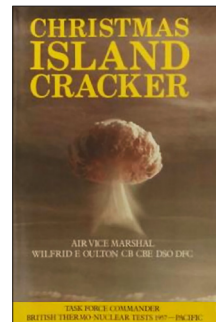
(Allen Lane, 2015)



## Christmas Island Cracker

AVM Wilfred Oulton

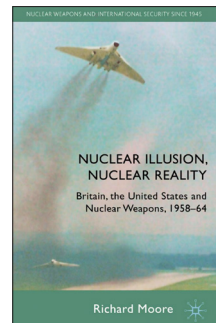
(Thomas Harmsworth, 1987)



## Nuclear Illusion, Nuclear Reality: Britain, the United States and Nuclear Weapons 1958-64

Richard Moore

(AIAA, 2010)



## Britain's Strategic Nuclear Deterrent: From Before the V-bomber to Beyond Trident

Robert H Paterson

(Abingdon: Routledge, 1997)



## The United Kingdom and Nuclear Deterrence

Jeremy Stocker

(Routledge, 2007)

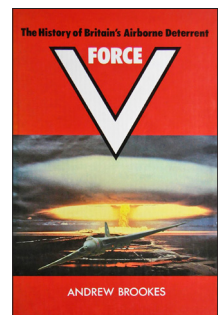


## The RAF and the Strategic Deterrent:

### V-Force: The History of Britain's Airborne Deterrent

Andrew Brookes

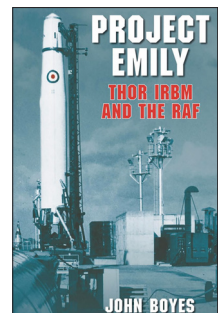
(London: Jane's Book Club Edition, 1982)



### Project Emily: Thor IRBM and the RAF

John Boyes

(History Press, 2008)



### Thor Ballistic Missile: The United States and the United Kingdom in Partnership

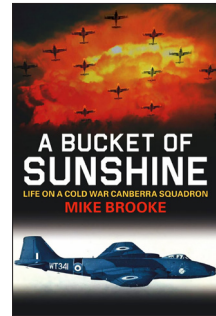
John Boyes

(Fonthill Media, 2015)



### **A Bucket of Sunshine: Life on a Cold War Canberra Squadron**

Mike Brooke  
(History Press, 2012)



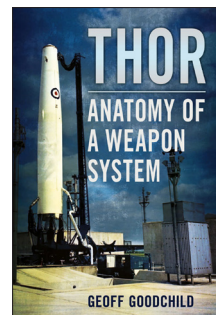
### **My Target was Leningrad**

Philip Goodall  
(Fonthill Media, 2015)



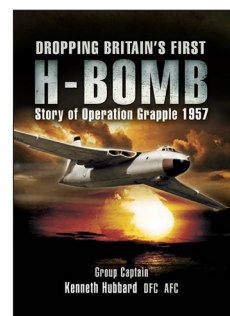
### **Thor: Anatomy of a Weapon System**

Geoff Goodchild  
(Fonthill Media, 2016)



### **Dropping Britain's First H-Bomb: Story of Operation Grapple 1957**

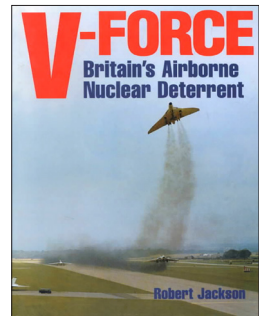
Gp Capt Kenneth Hubbard  
(Pen & Sword, 2008)



### **V-Force: Britain's Airborne Nuclear Deterrent**

Robert Jackson

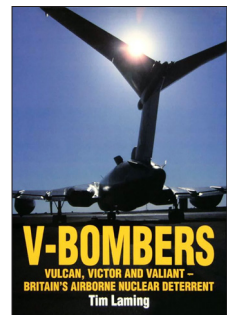
(Ian Allan Publishing, 2000)



### **V-Bombers: Vulcan, Victor and Valiant - Britain's Airborne Nuclear Deterrent**

Tim Laming

(Patrick Stephens Limited, 1997)



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