Marshal of the Royal Air Force Sir John Slessor and the Prevention of War

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Biography: Professor Sir Michael Howard, educated at Wellington College and Christ Church Oxford, served with the British Army 1943-45 during which time he was awarded the Military Cross. Now retired, his career as a military historian began at King's College London where he established the War Studies Department and helped to found the International Institute for Strategic Studies. Subsequently he was appointed Chichele Professor of the History of War and Regius Professor of Modern History at Oxford University and later appointed Robert A Lovett Professor of Military and Naval History at Yale University.

Abstract: This article examines the substantial contribution of Marshal of the Royal Air Force Sir John Slessor to strategic thinking during the early stages of the Cold War. Sir Michael maps out Slessor's conceptual journey and the consequent realignment of the RAF towards a deterrent posture.

Introduction

In November 1959, addressing the United States Air Force Academy, Marshal of the Royal Air Force Sir John Slessor informed his audience that... 'The aim to which the existence of the Royal Air Force is dedicated is the prevention of war.'[1] By that time nobody would have been surprised by that definition. It had already become the conventional wisdom. But ten years earlier it would certainly have raised eyebrows, not least within the Royal Air Force itself.

In 1949, and for several years thereafter, the assumption had been that the RAF must be prepared to fight a war against the Soviet Union that would be a re-run of World War II on an enormous scale, with the addition of nuclear weapons. Some idea of the conventional wisdom of that day can be found in a work published in 1949 by a senior American defence scientist Dr Vannevar Bush, entitled *Modern Arms and Free Men*:

> 'Great fleets of bombers would be in action at once, but this would be the opening phase only . . . They could undoubtedly devastate the cities and the war-potential of the enemy and its satellites, but it is highly doubtful if they could at once stop the march of great land armies. To overcome them would require a great national effort, and the marshalling of all our strength. The effort to keep the seas open would be particularly hazardous, because of modern submarines, and severe efforts would be required to stop them at the source. *Such a war would be a contest of the old form, with variations and new techniques of one sort or another. But, except for greater use of the atomic bomb, it would not differ much from the last struggle*.'[2]

These were the common assumptions when Slessor became Chief of the Air Staff in 1950. Such a war was seen as being, if not inevitable, at least very likely, and this continued to be so during the two years when he held that office. After his retirement global tension ebbed. For one thing the death of Stalin brought into power as leaders of the Soviet Union men who, if equally dedicated to the ideology of Marxism-Leninism, were at least more rational and approachable than that increasingly paranoid dictator. For another, the development of thermonuclear weapons had forced even the most conservative of strategists to revise all their assumptions about the nature of future war. None the less, even before he left office, and even before the development of thermonuclear weapons was known to be feasible, Slessor had thought through, and had persuaded many (though by no means all) of his service colleagues and political masters to accept, a doctrine of nuclear deterrence that was to provide the basis for all our strategic thinking until the end of the Cold War.

The concept of deterrence through Air Power came naturally to Slessor, but he was no narrow-minded protagonist of the traditional doctrines of the Royal Air Force, let alone of the Bomber Command in which he had served with distinction. His career had given him wide experience both of inter-Service co-operation and of the interface between political and military decision-making. He had attended the Army Staff College, and written a book,

Air Power and Armies, that was for long to be a leading text on the subject of army-air co-operation. He had been able to put many of his principles into practice while serving on the North West Frontier in India in the 1930s. During the Second World War he had co-operated closely with the Royal Navy when he commanded Coastal Command at the height of the Battle of the Atlantic, and then, as Deputy Commander-in-Chief of Allied Air Forces in the Mediterranean, he learned much of the potentiality, and even more the limitations, of air power, especially in the conduct of the Italian campaign. Finally, he spent two post-war years as Commandant of the Imperial Defence College before becoming Chief of the Air Staff in 1950; a year in which, with the invasion of South Korea, the Cold War reached its depths and, to many, global war appeared imminent.

By that time Slessor had already formulated the views about strategy that were to remain the basis for his thinking throughout the rest of his life. He had set them out in an address to the United States National War College in April 1948.[3] It was a bad time. The communist *coup d'etat* had just taken place in Prague; there was deadlock between the Soviet Union and the Western powers in Germany, and the political situation in Italy made civil war in that country seem by no means unlikely. Slessor's proposals for dealing with the situation were simple. Western policy should be 'to prevent war with Russia . . . and if war cannot be prevented, to win it as effectively as possible.' First priority should therefore be given to 'that form of force which affords the most obvious *deterrent* to attack by Russia': and that, without any doubt, was Air Power.

If war did break out, Slessor's expectations were much the same as those of Vannevar Bush. 'We may', he warned, 'have to undertake the mass evacuation of young and old people and invalids on an unprecedented scale . . . leaving the United Kingdom stripped and at action-stations with every able-bodied citizen of either sex that remains organised as part of the defence system, so that Britain can serve . . . as an unsinkable aircraft carrier for the striking forces of the United Nations.' The Navy would be fully stretched to keep the sea-lanes open, but the primary task of the Army would be civil defence. Yet, Slessor went on to suggest, such a major war 'holds out such appalling prospects that neither side would take it on . . . and we might find ourselves back in a sort of Crimean war . . . a Communist coup in Italy might result in Italian troops with US and British support fighting Jugoslav troops with Russian and Bulgarian support at the head of the Adriatic, with the Quadripartite Commission (the inter-allied body responsible for the administration of occupied Germany) still sitting in Berlin . . . We should not reject the idea of a local trial of strength . . . a localised testing of how much we or they mean business.'

Now note three things about what Slessor had to say. First, we find here, already clearly formulated, the concept of deterrence – and implicitly, bilateral deterrence, even though the Soviet Union had yet to test their atomic bomb. *Neither side*, he frankly admitted, might be prepared 'to take it on'; and that raised problems of mutual deterrence which he did not at that time explore and which he never really solved. Second, Slessor saw the primary instrument of

deterrence as lying in Air Power. And third, two years before the invasion of South Korea, he already visualised the contingency of 'limited war'. Other thinkers were working along similar lines. About the use of air power as a deterrent there was of course nothing new. It was a concept familiar within the Royal Air Force, whose expansion had been given priority by Neville Chamberlain in the 1930s precisely in the hope that it would deter Hitler from further aggression. The American political scientist, Bernard Brodie, had indeed taken this thinking to its extreme in a work, *The Absolute Weapon*, published in 1946, in which he made the startling pronouncement 'Thus far the chief purpose of our military establishment has been to win wars. From now on its chief purpose must be to avert them. It can have no other useful purpose'.[4] It was not a view that made him popular with the United States Chiefs of Staff, and it is doubtful whether at that time Slessor had ever heard of him. At the same time the British military writer Basil Liddell Hart, whom Slessor knew well, was thinking about 'limited wars'. 'Fear of atomic war,' he wrote, 'might lead to indirect methods of aggression, infiltration taking civil forms as well as military, to which nuclear retaliation would be irrelevant. Armed forces would still be required to fight 'sub-atomic war'.[5] But neither Brodie nor Liddell Hart, nor indeed any other strategic thinker, was in a position to translate their ideas directly into policy, as could Slessor during those vital years 1950-52.

As we have seen, Slessor became CAS just as the invasion of South Korea convinced the American leadership, if no one else, that the Cold War with the Soviet Union was about to turn hot, and resulted in a crash programme of re-armament in which the British loyally joined. This programme specified for the defence of Western Europe a force of 96 divisions and 9,000 aircraft, of which the United Kingdom was to find 9 divisions and 1,550 aircraft; targets established at a NATO conference in Lisbon in 1952, and known thereafter as 'the Lisbon Goals'. These were described by Slessor himself at the time as 'an economic impossibility, a logistical nightmare, and a strategic nonsense'.[6] This re-armament programme, promoting as it did a huge rise in world commodity prices at a time when the United Kingdom was already struggling with a desperate balance of payments problem, resulted in an economic crisis that the second Churchill administration inherited when it came to power in 1951. The following year the urgency of the military crisis ebbed with the stabilisation of the situation in Korea and continuing Soviet quiescence in Europe, so the government ordered the Chiefs of Staff to make drastic reductions in military appropriations. By now Slessor was Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee; and it is no disrespect to his immensely distinguished colleagues, Admiral Sir Rhoderic McGregor and Field Marshal Sir William Slim, to say that it was largely due to his leadership that the British military was able to come forward with clear and agreed proposals based on a comprehensive strategic theory that enabled their political masters to tailor their armed forces to meet the political challenges facing them at an acceptable economic cost. It was certainly the first time they had done so in the twentieth century, and I doubt whether they have done anything comparable since.

You will all know the story of the gestation and birth of the famous report on Defence Policy and Global Strategy of 1952; how Slessor took his colleagues on their own, without their staffs,

for a week-end to Greenwich. There the three of them hammered out a paper that was to remain the framework of British defence policy for a further decade and lay down principles which were to guide Western strategy until the end of the Cold War forty years later.[7] Slessor's phraseology ran all through it. The principal objects of Allied strategy, it stated, 'are to prevent Russia and China from gaining their ends by infiltrating and disintegrating the Free World, *and to prevent war*' (emphasis added). 'The first essential of Allied policy must therefore be to establish and maintain for as long as possible a *really effective deterrent against war*'; so priority should be given to air-strike forces. 'We conclude' the paper continued, 'that war is unlikely provided that the Cold War is conducted by the Allies in a patient, level-headed and determined manner . . . Provided that *the great deterrent* of atomic attack is kept in being . . . the likelihood of war is more remote than it was thought two years ago.'[8] This phrase, 'The Great Deterrent' was one that Slessor made his own, and he continued to use it for the rest of his life.

War of course might happen, the appreciation continued, and for that eventuality strong conventional forces, especially naval forces, must be kept in being. Even if the homeland of both belligerents were to be devastated by atomic attack, the conflict might go on, in what became known as a 'broken-backed' manner. Slessor himself was sceptical about this, and only his desire to avoid a total breach with the Royal Navy made him lend his signature to the idea of 'broken-backed' war. The development of thermonuclear weapons was to make him more sceptical still.

Shortly after his retirement Slessor published a book, *Strategy for the West*, in which he set out his views at some length.[9] It was a seminal work. In it he laid out a strategy for the conduct of the Cold War that was to be followed, and followed successfully, for the next thirty-five years. During those years so many hundreds of books and thousands of articles were published about nuclear strategy (most of them quite useless and some of them, I have to admit, by me) that it is immensely refreshing to re-read that book and remind ourselves of Slessor's sterling common sense, which was as evident in his political judgements as in his military. It was not the task of the West, he insisted, to eliminate Communism; it was 'to drive it back behind its frontiers and keep it there.'[10] He had no time for the kind of crusade that was at the time being preached in the United States. 'We have' he wrote, 'no God-given mission to destroy Communism'. Rather 'our policy must accept that our opponents have their own rights, hopes and fears . . . [and] must be a reciprocal programme of Live and Let Live.'[11] It required great patience and self-restraint in order to prove 'that the Western way of life is better than the Communist way of life', and it meant accepting, perhaps for many years, 'a heavy burden of armaments.'[12] But this would provide time and opportunity 'for the forces of sanity that are at work in the world to assert themselves.'[13] It did, and they have. Few policies, either political or military, have ever been so triumphantly vindicated.

Slessor made it clear that the main 'burden of armaments', would be made up of those weapons whose task was to *prevent* war. Economies could then be made in all the others. Freed from the constraints imposed by his colleagues in the senior Services, Slessor was now

able to state categorically his view that the day of 'balanced forces' was over. 'We can no longer afford the attempt to superimpose the new atomic air strategy on top of the old conventional strategy' he stated, 'so we . . . must, and fortunately can, make a virtue of necessity. We must maintain atomic air power to prevent war, and we must supplement and support it by conventional forces . . . of a size and cost that the free nations can afford to maintain without breaking themselves.'[14] These would still be needed to deal with limited wars of the Korean type, and it would be the function of strategic air power to keep them limited; 'to hold the ring and prevent them from spreading, by the threat of the Big Stick in the background.'[15]

But what if nuclear war did break out? The Russians might be effectively deterred from using 'all-out war' as an instrument of policy, but what about the West? Slessor frankly accepted the possibility that the West might itself have to initiate nuclear war in defence of its vital interests and 'not even shrink from striking the first blow as an alternative to bloodless defeat.'[16] But would we not be ourselves deterred from striking the first blow by fear of Soviet nuclear retaliation? Here Slessor was less than convincing. He admitted that defence of the United Kingdom against enemy nuclear attack was impossible, except for certain key installations. As for everybody else, he suggested, they must just grin and bear it. 'There are worse things' he argued, 'than physical extinction.'[17] The British people would simply have to 'steel themselves to risks, and take what comes to them, knowing that thereby they are playing as essential a part in the country's defences as the pilot in the fighter and the man behind the gun.'[18] Here it must be said that Slessor lost touch with reality. There could be no comparison between the aftermath of a nuclear, let alone a thermonuclear, strike and the German blitz of 1940. The problem of 'self-deterrence' as it came to be called, was not to be solved by this kind of exhortation, and he must have known it.

So what was the answer to the problem of 'self-deterrence'? Slessor never found it, but neither, I think, did anyone else. He countered the proposed solution of the CND with their cry for the abolition of nuclear weapons by declaring that 'it never has made and never will make any sense trying to abolish any particular weapon of war. What we have to abolish is war.' Nuclear weapons had done just that, so 'the greatest disservice that anyone could possibly do to the cause of peace would be to abolish nuclear armaments *on either side*'[19] (emphasis added). But the logical inconsistency remained. If the Soviets retained their own nuclear weapons, as Slessor recognised as being not only inevitable but even desirable, would not the West be deterred from using theirs even under the most extreme circumstances? This problem was to obsess strategic thinkers for the next thirty years, and so far as I know they never came up with an answer.

Slessor and the Air Staff had hoped, at least initially, that by pre-emptive strikes against Soviet air bases they might keep the damage to acceptable proportions – at least so they thought, until the Soviets developed thermonuclear weapons. The true strategic rationale for the initial development of the independent British nuclear deterrent was the fear that the United States' air forces could not be relied upon to give such targets the necessary immediate priority.[20]

Before the development of thermonuclear weapons and ballistic missiles, this reasoning made a certain amount of sense, but it was not thought politic to make it public and Slessor, so far as I know, never used it in his public statements. His own arguments were more emotional and, it must be said, less convincing. Britain needed her own deterrent force, he maintained, for one overriding reason; to preserve her status as a Great Power. 'The fact is' he told an Oxford audience in 1954, 'that today a bomber force equipped with the most effective modern weapons is the battle-fleet of the twentieth century and, if we want to remain a Great Power, we must face up to the cost.'[21] In *Strategy for the West* he was even more insistent; 'This thing is so much a matter of life and death to all of us that no British family of the requisite quality should rest content until they have at least one son serving his country in the air.'[22] British pretensions to such Great Power status did not survive the Suez affair of 1956, and thereafter the defenders of Britain's independent nuclear status had to fall back on more practical arguments. Within a few years, in any case, Britain's nuclear status was no longer the concern of the Royal Air Force alone.

One of the last missions that Slessor had to undertake as Chairman of the Chiefs of Staffs Committee was to visit Washington and explain the new British policy to his American colleagues. They gave him a rough ride. In the aftermath of the invasion of South Korea the United States' armed forces had expanded enormously, and they intended to keep it that way. They did not agree that the Soviets were the cautious, calculating adversary depicted by Slessor, as alarmed by the prospect of a nuclear war as we were ourselves. Instead they expected them to launch an all-out attack on the West as soon as their nuclear weapons were operative, which was expected to be within two years, and the West must be ready to meet them at all points. With NATO pledged to expand on the scale laid out by the Lisbon Goals, the last message they wanted to hear was that their principal ally intended to cut back the forces needed to fight a war and instead rely on nuclear deterrence to prevent one.[23]

Two years later they had changed their minds. Stalin was dead; his successors appeared more accommodating; the war in Korea had been successfully contained and was increasingly unpopular; and Dwight D Eisenhower had been elected President on a policy, not of rolling back the forces of communism, but of restoring peace in Korea and balancing the budget at home. Suddenly the Americans discovered the concept of nuclear deterrence as a solution to their strategic and economic problems over what they called 'the long haul'. This policy, termed 'the New Look' after the latest developments in Parisian *haute couture* was expounded by Eisenhower's Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles, first to his allies in the NATO Council in April 1953, and then to the general public in a famous article in *Foreign Affairs* in January 1954. The object, he there explained, would be to place its military dependence 'primarily on a great capacity to retaliate, instantly, by means and at places of our own choosing, [thereby gaining] . . . more security at less cost.'

In an article that he himself contributed to Foreign Affairs a little later in the year Slessor gently pointed out that this was 'not altogether a new concept . . . The so-called 'New Look' is in fact

merely a rationalisation of tendencies, themselves originating in economic factors, which it had been increasingly obvious since 1952 would have to be faced sooner or later.' But Dulles was an embarrassing ally. Slessor himself had argued (and was to argue with increasing conviction) that 'The Great Deterrent' had only a limited effectiveness. It had abolished, not war in general, but only 'total war' as it had been waged in the twentieth century. It would deter the Russians, and indeed anyone else, from initiating a major war as an instrument of policy, as Hitler had in 1939, or taking the risk of provoking a major war as the Austrians had in 1914.[24] To that extent, and to that extent only, war had 'abolished itself'. But that only made it more likely that there would be limited wars of the Korean type, and in dealing with those massive retaliatory nuclear power was irrelevant, if not counter-productive. 'If we place too much reliance on the atomic deterrent for purposes for which it is unsuitable' he told the RUSI in 1954, 'the effect may be exactly the reverse'.[25] 'The Great Deterrent' he told an Oxford audience a year later 'will not absolve us from the unpleasant obligation to be ready to meet limited aggression with appropriate limited force.'[26]

Meanwhile the unveiling of 'the New Look' had set off in the United States a debate that was to continue for decades and drown out the more modest discussions that were carried on in London in such venues as Chatham House, the Military Commentators' Circle, and the newly-founded Institute for Strategic Studies. Increasingly the stage was to be occupied by such prima donnas as Henry Kissinger, Tom Schelling, Bernard Brodie and Albert Wohlstetter, who discussed at an ever more abstruse level the nature of deterrence and the problem of maintaining its credibility in an age of rapid technological change – questions to which British thinkers, including Slessor himself, were to make little further contribution. As the decade wore on, Slessor became increasingly concerned over the nature of those 'limited wars' whose continuance he had always foreseen. How could they be kept limited, and prevented from escalating into the major wars that had, in principal, abolished themselves?

The leading British thinker on this question was a sailor, Rear-Admiral Sir Anthony Buzzard, who had resigned his post as Director of Naval Intelligence largely in order to campaign in public for the views that he had been unable to persuade his superiors to accept when he was in the Admiralty. Buzzard was a rigorous thinker and a committed Christian who regarded the idea of all-out nuclear war as both immoral and counter-productive. While accepting that the West had to prepare for major war in the last resort, he was reluctant to accept, either that we should initiate the use of nuclear weapons or, if they were used, that they should target civilian objectives. He therefore pressed, not only for precise restrictions to be set on the use of force in limited wars of the Korea type, (what Liddell Hart had called 'sub-atomic wars') but that these restraints should be extended even to major hostilities. The use of nuclear weapons, if they had to be used at all, should be initially and explicitly confined to military targets in the battle zone itself. If their use had to be extended, they should still be confined to military targets, but the capacity for such escalation should be kept in reserve to deter the adversary from raising the stakes. If a formal agreement could be reached along these lines, so much the better; but in any case the West should make its own intentions quite clear in advance.

This doctrine Buzzard termed 'graduated deterrence', and later became known to strategic pundits as 'Intra-war deterrence'. Slessor disagreed, and made his own views clear in a notable debate with Buzzard at Chatham House in November 1955.[27] For one thing, if the Soviets invaded Western Europe, to confine nuclear weapons to the battlefield would be to punish our friends and leave our adversaries scot-free. But more generally, he could not believe 'that, if it comes to major war the hydrogen bomb will not be used sooner or later; and my own feeling is that, ghastly though it would be, it would be less awful for us in the long run if it were used sooner than if it were used later.' In the case of 'limited wars' fought outside Europe, however, he agreed with much of what Buzzard had to say. Unwritten limitations had operated in Korea, where the United Nations refrained from attacking targets north of the Yalu River, and this might work again. He suggested, echoing the thinking of Liddell Hart on the subject, that 'It might suit both sides in a war of this nature to revert to the classical theory and concentrate on the defeat of the enemy's armed forces while limiting, if not entirely excluding, military action against centres of population.'[28] A possible model, he suggested, might indeed be the old RAF doctrine of 'Air Control' used in policing the Empire, when ample notice had been given before bombing to enable non-combatants to get away, and 'prescribed areas' had been designated in which any movement was liable to attack without further warning.

That proved in fact to be a pretty disastrous policy when the United States adopted it in Vietnam with their 'free-fire zones', but another point made by Slessor about limited wars was to be highly relevant to that conflict. One reason why he agreed that it might be unwise to use nuclear weapons in 'Korea-type' conflicts was that the dependence of Western armed forces on ports and bases would make them highly vulnerable to retaliation. In any case, he emphasised, what would be needed for such wars was not sophisticated weaponry but good fighting troops prepared to live as rough as their adversaries. The real weakness of Western armies, he warned, lay in the huge logistical infrastructure made necessary by their heavy weaponry and their high standard of living. 'The organisation of armies', he wrote a shade nostalgically in 1957, 'should be more akin to that of the old Punjab frontier force . . . who went cheerfully to war on foot with a rifle, a couple of bandoliers, a bag of raisins and a chupatti or two, and a water bottle.'[29] The American forces did not go to war in Vietnam equipped like that. Their adversaries did.

In his later years Slessor became increasingly interested in questions of arms control and disarmament, including a possible disengagement of military forces from Germany – a heretical idea he had first floated as early as 1954 and never wholly abandoned. He observed with some concern the enormous build-up of United States military strength, both nuclear and conventional, introduced by Robert McNamara in the early 1960s in order to provide both forces to fight 'limited wars' and to maintain a nuclear 'second-strike' capability. Like most of his countrymen he remained until the end of his life a strong believer in what became known as 'minimal deterrence'. In a note he wrote in 1963, referring to the McNamara re-armament programme, he accepted that 'We must allow a most generous margin for misjudgement in a situation that has no precedents to guide us. But margin piled up on margins can add up

to political, economic and military lunacy. We should never forget in this connection that the primary aim of Western policy is to work towards general comprehensive disarmament which alone can give the world security in the long term.[30] Nuclear deterrence might prevent war but it could not by itself create peace.

Slessor would probably not have expressed himself in these terms ten years earlier when he relinquished the office of Chief of the Air Staff, but not the least admirable of his qualities was his willingness to re-examine and where necessary readjust his ideas with changing circumstances. He was in the habit of describing himself as 'one who is no longer in a position of responsibility but who has had some time to think about these things.'[31] and think he did, hard and long, in a fashion unusual among senior retired officers. Indeed it is hard to think of anyone else who reached his rank and exercised comparable responsibilities, in the British or any other Armed Forces, who made so substantial a contribution to the strategic thinking of his time. There had been brilliant mavericks like Herbert Richmond and J F C Fuller, whose originality had set them at odds with their Services throughout their careers. There had of course been Trenchard, but his grand vision had to be refined and expounded by more articulate acolytes – not the least of whom was Slessor himself. But the very idea of 'Boom' Trenchard engaging, as did Slessor, in long, subtle, good-humoured arguments with his Service colleagues, with his American allies, and, later, with upstart young academics like myself who had never dropped a bomb in anger, boggles the imagination.

I must not conclude this lecture without paying my own personal homage to Jack Slessor. In the mid-fifties some of us founded what was to become the International Institute for Strategic Studies to provide an informed and critical forum to debate the whole issue of deterrence and arms control, and Jack became one of our earliest Council members. He was a regular attender at our seminars, discussions and conferences, and never for a moment tried to pull rank. He always expressed himself with force and precision, but listened courteously to dissenting views, made thoughtful interventions in discussions and, without ever abandoning his principles, allowed himself to be moved along by the arguments. He never made you feel a fool, but if you disagreed with him it was wise first to think through exactly what you were going to say. His was always the voice of experience, realism and sanity, and he kept us all on track. Although he would himself have hotly denied it, he was indeed a truly great man. His contribution to the winning of the war had been outstanding. No less was his contribution to the subsequent keeping of the peace.

Notes

[1] Text in Slessor Papers held by Air Historical Branch.
[2] Vannevar Bush, *Modern Arms and Free Men* (New York, Simon and Schuster 1949) pp.115-116. Emphasis added.
[3] Reprinted in Sir John Slessor, *The Great Deterrent* (London, Cassell 1957) p.72. (hereafter *GD*).
[4] Bernard Brodie, *The Absolute Weapon* (New York, Harcourt Brace, 1946) p.89.
[5] B H Liddell Hart, *The Revolution in Warfare* (London, Faber 1946) p.87.

[6] Notes for discussion with US Joint Chiefs of Staff 29/30 July 1952, in Slessor Papers, AHB, Air 75/20.
[7] An account of the Greenwich meeting and its significance is to be found in John Baylis *Ambiguity and Deterrence: British Nuclear Strategy 1945-54* (Oxford, Clarendon Press 1995) pp.126 ff.
[8] Text in Slessor Papers, AHB, AIR 75/20.
[9] Sir John Slessor, *Strategy for the West* (London, Cassell 1954). Hereafter *SW*.
[10] *SW* p.2.
[11] *SW* p.27.
[12] *SW* p5.
[13] *SW* p.21.
[14] *SW* p.49.
[15] *SW* p.64.
[16] *SW* p.7.
[17] *SW* ibid.
[18] *SW* p.108.
[19] *SW* p.5.
[20] On this see Ian Clark & Nicholas J Wheeler, *The British Origins of Nuclear Strategy, 1945-1955* (Oxford, Clarendon Press 1989) passim.
[21] *GD* p.89.
[22] *SW* p.105.
[23] See n.6 above.
[24] *GD* p.181.
[25] *GD* p.144.
[26] *GD* p.182.
[27] International Affairs, April 1956, pp.148 ff.
[28] *GD* p.246.
[29] *GD* p.310.
[30] 'NATO Nuclear Strategy: some lessons from History' in Slessor Papers, AHB.
[31] *GD* p.217.