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**British naval policy
and Norwegian security**

Maritime power in transition, 1951-60

Mats Berdal

**INSTITUTT FOR
FORSVARSSTUDIER**

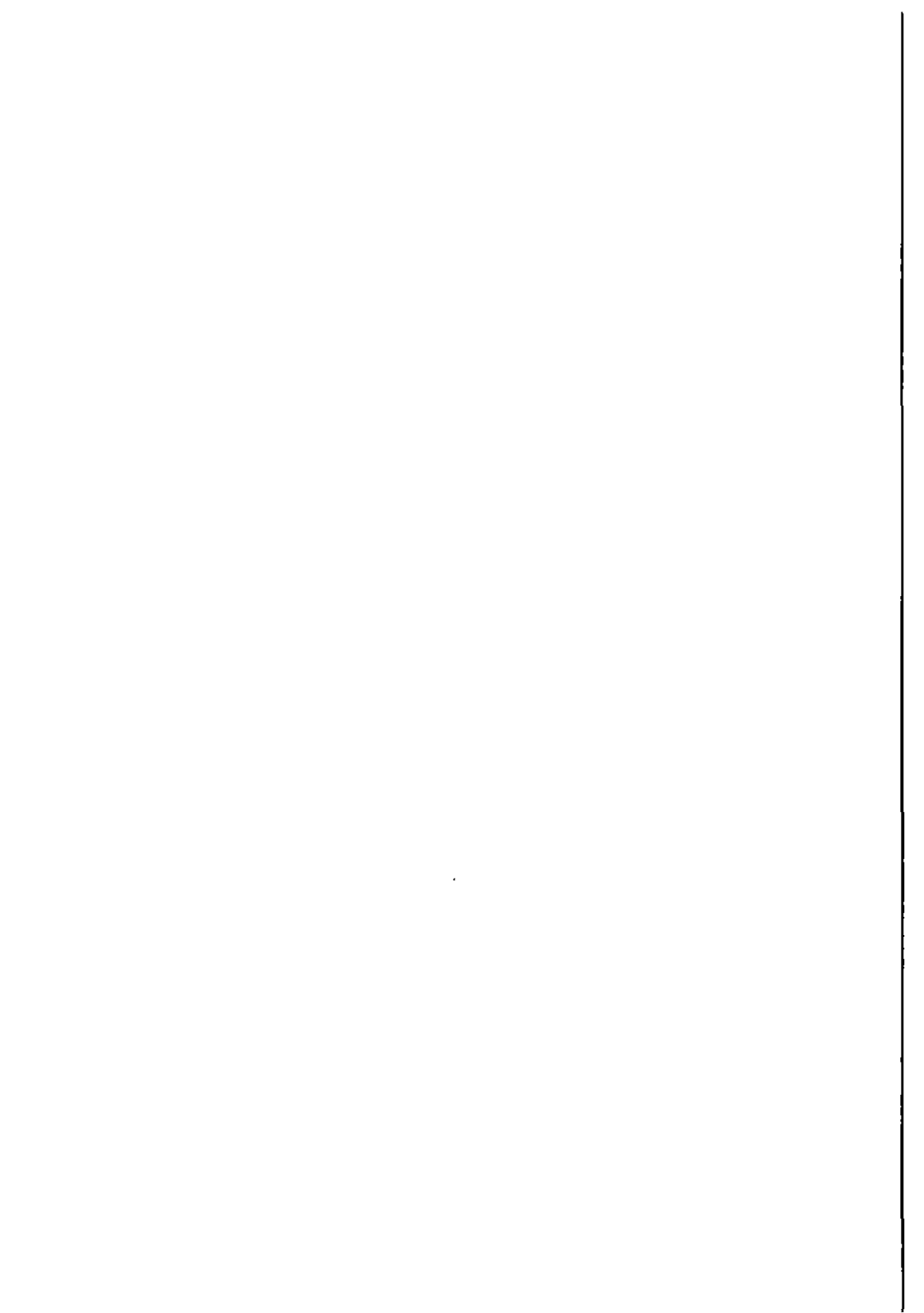
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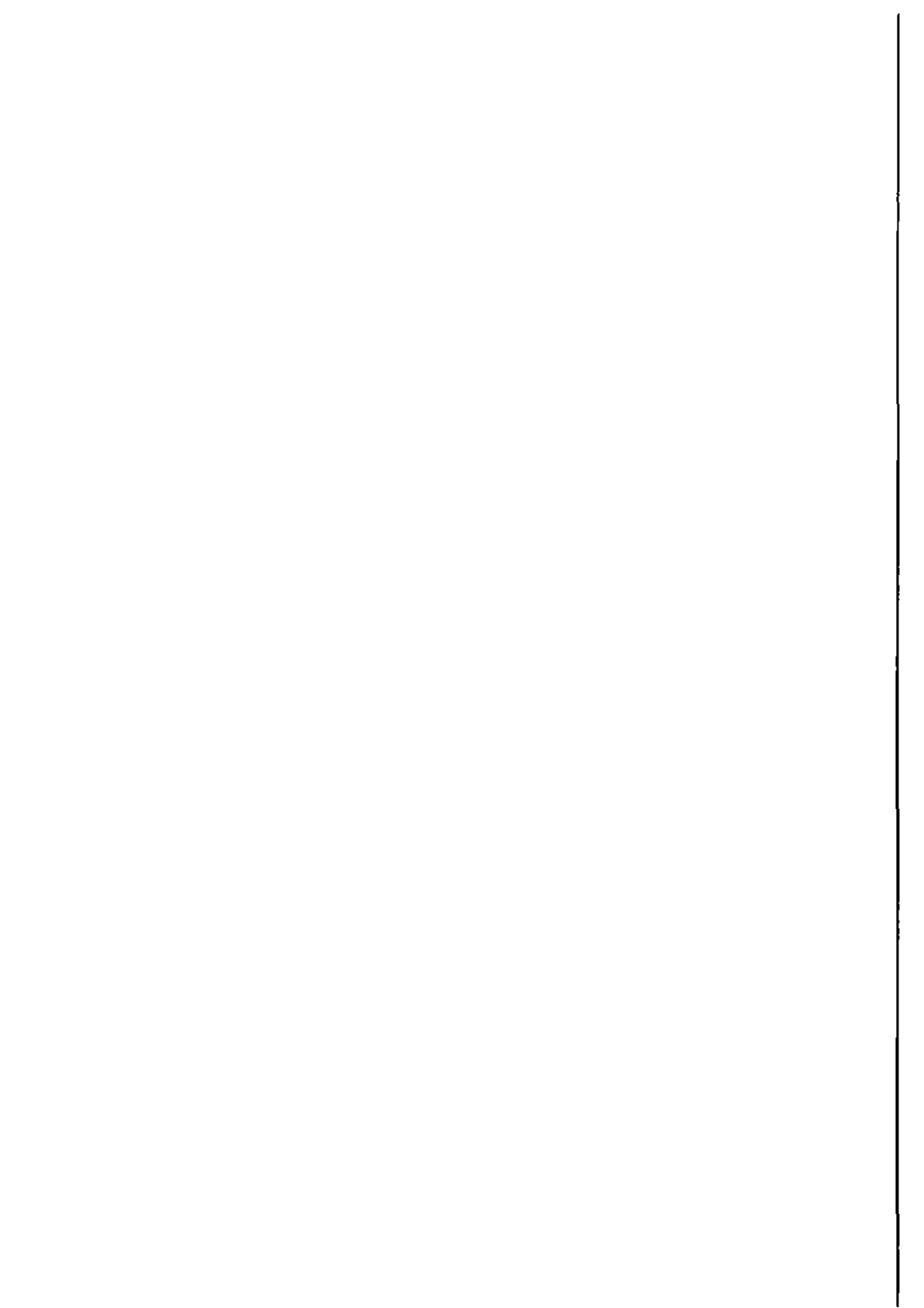
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INTRODUCTION

Throughout the Second World War, Norway was recognized by all three members of the Grand Alliance as belonging to the British and American sphere of military responsibility. Norway was also assumed to be an area of "special interest" to Britain; a reflection both of the development of extensive functional ties during the war and historically close Anglo-Norwegian political and cultural links. This "closeness" clearly pre-dated their common struggle against German hegemonic aspirations in Europe. Indeed, since gaining full independence in 1905, Norway had come to base its foreign policy, in part, on an unarticulated or implicit assumption of British assistance in the event of war. This implicit British security "guarantee" was understood by Norwegian decision-makers to rest on Britain's own interest in preserving Norway's territorial integrity thus denying other great powers a foothold in the country.¹ However, neither the perceived protection afforded by geographical remoteness, nor the "presumed protective shield of British naval supremacy in the North Sea"², could prevent Norway from becoming involved in the Second World War. Still, Anglo-Norwegian diplomatic and military cooperation flourished during the years of conflict and occupation. Moreover, close military collaboration, albeit mostly of a functional character, persisted into the early postwar years.³

As relations between the Soviet Union and the Western powers deteriorated, however, it soon became clear that British officials were only willing to reaffirm the "closeness" of Anglo-Norwegian political ties and acknowledge the strategic value of Norway in *general* terms. If the "bridge-building" policy of the Norwegian Government between 1945 and 1948 can be described as "hardly more than hope against hope for the reestablishment of tacit Great-power understanding about Scandinavia as a sanctuary from the threatening Cold War";⁴ the expectation of British military assistance to Norway in the

event of actual war was equally unrealistic. In the period from 1945 to 1950 the British Chiefs of Staff (COS), having to base their global planning on much diminished postwar resources, made no provision for and attached no priority to the defence of Norway. Scandinavia was viewed as a subsidiary theatre and COS planning focused, above all, on the Middle East which was deemed more important even than the defence of Western Europe.⁵ In early 1948, Field Marshal Lord Montgomery, Chief of the Imperial General Staff, was one of a few senior officers who regarded the direct defence of Western Europe to be as important as "the maintenance of a firm hold on the Middle East".⁶ Yet, even his proposals centred on a continental commitment and defence along the Rhine, with no mention made of the flanks.⁷ On 17 March 1948, at a Chiefs of Staff meeting convened to discuss future strategy, the First Sea Lord, Admiral Sir John Cunningham, concurred with Lord Montgomery's expressed view that "Scandinavia could not be considered vital to us".⁸ As if to underline the importance of the Mediterranean region, Admiral Cunningham - representing a service traditionally conscious of the interdependence of British and Norwegian security concerns - stated that he considered the defence of Italy and Greece more important than measures of support to Norway. Clearly, since British strategic priorities lay elsewhere, specific and binding defence commitments were proving difficult to elicit.⁹

This is not to suggest that the British military did not recognize the strategic importance of Norway in relation to the defence of both the British Isles and the sea lines of communication across the Atlantic. A study by the Joint Planning Staff in June 1947 on the "strategic considerations involved in the question of a common arrangement by Norway, Denmark and Sweden for the defence of Scandinavia," did indeed stress the "great strategic importance" of Scandinavia to the Western Powers and Russia alike.¹⁰ The Planning Staff regarded "... the integrity of Scandinavia in the event of war as almost as important as the integrity of France, Holland and Belgium".¹¹

However, on the crucial question of British backing for a possible "Scandinavian defence bloc", the report stated that while the idea of such a bloc ought not be discouraged, Britain should not "... on any grounds give any sort of guarantee or promise of military aid ..."¹² Thus, by the late 1940s, a trend had been established whereby Britain was "shying away ... from any serious commitment to the defence of Norway with the United States taking on an increasing burden".¹³

In the first series of joint Anglo-American war plans, such as DOUBLEQUICK (October 1948) and GALLOPER (October 1949), the COS again insisted that primary emphasis be placed on the defence of the Middle East as the main staging area for the strategic air offensive against the Soviet Union.¹⁴ The creation of NATO in April 1949 did not fundamentally alter the restrictive nature of COS interests in Scandinavia, nor did it affect British unwillingness to formalize arrangements to assist Norway in the event of conflict. Initial British reluctance first to join the North European Regional Planning Group (NERPG) and later to assume direct responsibilities in the North European Command (activated in April 1951) were further indications of the same trend.¹⁵ Similarly, the negotiating record of the final and revised version of NATO's first defence plan - the Medium Term Defence Plan (MTDP) approved by the Council in December 1950 - was also symptomatic of British attitudes.

Although there is some evidence between 1951 and 1953 of an increased willingness on the part of the British COS to give the northern flank a more central part in Alliance strategy, the overall place of Norway in British defence priorities remained shackled by prior strategic commitments, limited resources, and extremely pessimistic assessments about the possibilities of defending the country. Commenting upon General Eisenhower's proposed Annual Report in March 1952, Lord Montgomery, then Deputy SACEUR, expressed views

which, at least on this occasion, corresponded to those of the COS:

He (Montgomery) objected to the inference that we conceive of two strong "fortresses", one on either flank. He said our known weaknesses in Italy are bad enough, but when we look at the North Flank we see almost no strength there and very little in prospect. Talk of a Northern "bulwark" is rubbish.¹⁶

However, whilst the COS as a *collective body* continued to show little interest in reassessing the place of Norway in its defence priorities, by late 1951 and early 1952 such lack of interest no longer applied to all three services. As will be argued in this paper, in the early 1950s Admiralty thinking - specifically as it applied to the employment of the Fleet Air Arm - evolved in a manner which again led to an emphasis on the importance of Norway and the contiguous seas in British naval policy. As Clive Archer has noted, the Royal Navy became the *one* service which remained committed to the defence of Norway,¹⁷ even though the naval establishment, especially after Korean War build-up had been completed, was forced to reduce the size of both the active and reserve fleets. In spite of competing strategic priorities, persistent balance of payments difficulties and unrelenting financial pressure between 1951 and 1957, the Royal Navy continued to emphasize operations in "Northern Waters" and presented the defence of Norway as an important argument in favour of maintaining the Fleet Air Arm. *Effectively*, however, this renewed interest only lasted until the British Defence Review of 1957, at which point retrenchment in naval establishments began in earnest, and, more importantly, the "centre of gravity of future naval deployments would move significantly eastward".¹⁸ This in turn was to have important and lasting implications for American naval interest and presence in an area which, at least in naval terms, had always been seen as Britain's "own backyard".

The questions, then, which this study seeks to address are threefold. *First*, what were the principal reasons - strategic, political, bureaucratic or otherwise - for the Royal Navy's interest in Norway before the 1957 Defence Review? *Secondly*, how did this interest translate into specific operational commitments and activities in Northern Waters and Norway? *Thirdly*, how did the outcome of Sandys's Defence Review influence British and American naval policy with respect to the north Atlantic?

I. THE ROYAL NAVY AND NORWAY, 1951-57

*"Have we no British Admirals?"*¹⁹
Winston Churchill, 1951

1.1. British sea power and Norway

When General Eisenhower in a letter to his former mentor General Marshall in March 1951 described the command arrangements he envisaged for Europe, he wrote how in "the North ... the only disposable strength will, of necessity, be furnished by the British Navy".²⁰ Eisenhower wrote that he also hoped to "get the agreement of the British Admiralty to provide, in operational emergency, naval strength to support Norway and Denmark".²¹ This was not surprising given that the maritime area was one where Britain, especially before the full impact of the *Radical Review* process that began in January 1953, was still a source of very considerable strength. During the Atlantic-wide NATO exercise MARINER, held in September and October 1953 and the largest international manoeuvre since the end of the Second World War, Britain participated with 117 ships of all types and 20 air squadrons. By comparison, the U.S. committed 78 ships and 11 air squadrons to the exercise.²² In a major tactical exercise held in the Norwegian Sea some two years later, the British naval contingent included no less than *five* carriers, six submarines and 25 ships of other types.²³

As Eisenhower's letter to Marshall indicates, the establishment of NATO's integrated command structure was a key factor in ensuring that the Royal Navy again took more than a declaratory interest in Norway after its immediate postwar concentration on the Middle East and the Mediterranean. In spite of Churchill's public misgivings about Anglo-American naval

command arrangements in the Atlantic, both the Commander-in-Chief Eastern Atlantic (CINCEASTLANT) and the Commander, Allied Naval Forces Northern Europe (COMNAV-NORTH) were British Admirals, thus confirming the Royal Navy's preeminent interest in the region. Renewed concern about the Soviet submarine fleet and the emergence in 1951 of a credible Soviet surface threat following the appearance of the *Sverdlov* class cruiser also led the naval staff to take a more direct interest in Northern Europe. So did clearly the outbreak and the experience of the Korean War, and the earlier than anticipated Soviet nuclear test breakthrough in late August 1949.²⁴ Both these incidents heightened the sense of vulnerability to Soviet military power in Europe and served to concentrate Navy opinion to a greater degree than before on the requirements of defending Western Europe and the "home base". Against the background of these general considerations, however, naval interest in Norway between 1951 and 1957 should be understood in relation to three more specific factors.

The first of these was the adoption in the early 1950s, of what Eric Grove has referred to as a "British Atlantic strike fleet strategy" centred around the contribution of British fleet carriers to NATO's Strike Fleet.²⁵ As we shall see, the need to defend Norway, or at least deny it as a "secure" staging area for air and naval operations against Britain, was thought by the Admiralty to be a particularly persuasive argument in its struggle to preserve the *Fleet Air Arm*.²⁶ This, however, was to change after 1957 when the rationale for maintaining larger carriers shifted to an emphasis on their Limited and Cold War functions in the Middle East, the Indian Ocean and South East Asia, that is east of Suez.

Secondly, the Navy's attachment to the concept of "broken-backed war", a lengthy section on which had been included in the 1952 *Global Strategy Paper*, also ensured continued interest in Northern Europe. More specifically, Admiralty planners argued that the "decisive" importance of the submarine campaign in the period of broken-backed war heighten-

ed the need to prevent the Soviet Navy from establishing forward submarine bases in North Norway.

Thirdly, in arguing the case that the Royal Navy maintained an operational as well as a declaratory interest in Norway, it is important to stress that until the Defence Review of 1957 all three Services retained a considerable degree of operational and planning autonomy. This in turn had a direct impact on the strategic priorities and dispositions of each service.²⁷ As Martin Navias has pointed out, long before the Defence White Paper of April 1957 there had been "an irrevocable movement towards a *declaratory* stress on massive retaliation and changes in force posture" within the British defence establishment.²⁸ Yet, at the operational level, services continued to fight for policies that would protect their particular programmes, one result of which was that no significant change in Britain's force posture accompanied the strategic consensus that appeared to have been reached with the *Global Strategy Paper* of 1952. Thus, while the Defence White Papers of both 1955 and 1956 stressed a "war preparation priority list" reflecting increased emphasis on strengthening the deterrent, the Navy "continued to attempt to prevent the implications of such an ordering from undermining its favoured roles and capabilities".²⁹ It was partly for this "bureaucratic" reason that the Navy was able to maintain a commitment to Norway.

1.2. British Strike Fleet strategy in Northern Waters, 1951-57

Between 1945 and 1949-50 external British defence priorities had focused almost exclusively on the Middle East. Under the three "pillar" strategy agreed upon by the COS in June 1947 - *protection of sea communications, defence of the home base and the Middle East* - the Navy concentrated its efforts on the protection of shipping by emphasising counter-mine and convoy escort forces.³⁰ By 1951, however, the Admiralty was arguing increasingly in favour of a more offensive concept of

operations based around fleet carriers in the Atlantic capable of launching direct attacks against Soviet naval targets on the Kola Peninsula and in the Baltic area, as well as dealing with the threat posed by Soviet long-range cruisers. The Strike Fleet strategy, with an increasing emphasis on the carrier's usefulness as a nuclear platform alongside the American component of the Strike Fleet, thus signified a shift in British naval doctrine away from a concept of carrier operations primarily geared towards the direct defence of shipping. As Admiral Sir Michael Denny, Commander of the Home Fleet (1955-56), put it in 1956: the Strike Fleet would "undertake offensive and support operations, rather than the direct defence of the Atlantic trade routes".³¹

The activation of Allied Command Atlantic (April 1952), the first NATO command post on American soil and the first peacetime international ocean command, was a factor of major importance in terms of moving towards a Strike Fleet strategy on the part of the Admiralty. According to William Crowe, this NATO commitment "signified a marked change in the Board of Admiralty's attitude. It was envisaging naval forces carrying the war to enemy territory, attacking land targets, and supporting troops."³² In early 1953, the Mediterranean was no longer envisaged to be the principal theatre of operations for British fleet carriers whose wartime responsibilities had been transferred to *Carrier Group Two* of the Strike Fleet.³³ The Strike Fleet mission in war was to "... deploy to the North Atlantic and attack targets in Northern Russia with atomic bombs and hopefully to support landings in the Scandinavian area".³⁴ On the eve of the Radical Review process, British war-plans had assigned two operational fleet carriers to the group whose mission included covering SACLANT's Scandinavian convoys. In these plans, the carriers were given a very wide range of tasks, including "... fighter and ASW support ... 'attacking at source', supporting NATO land forces, and attacking surface raiders".³⁵ In addition to the carriers, the British element of the planned wartime composition of the Strike Fleet thirty days after the outbreak of war included one

battleship, four cruisers and fifteen destroyers.³⁶

In June 1951, Eisenhower's so-called "flank concept" had been summarized by his Chief of Staff, General Alfred Gruenther, before an audience in Paris:

Under this concept, General Eisenhower has in mind that the two flank commands, Northern Europe and Southern Europe, are going to be primarily naval and air commands. At this stage in the development of forces, there are not sufficient ground forces in either of these areas to constitute a strong defence. General Eisenhower's concept of strategy is that by the use of air and naval power on these flanks he then forces the decision in the Central area. As a matter of fact, this area becomes the cork that closes and shuts up the bottle.³⁷

Although SACEUR's ambitious "flank concept" was rehearsed by Anglo-American carrier task forces in 1952 during exercise MAINBRACE, the concept was never properly implemented.³⁸ In spite of this, the Admiralty *continued* to stress the Navy's responsibilities in Northern Waters. In the summer of 1953, the Admiralty's Plans Division listed the need to ensure "the supply and possible reinforcement of the NATO Allies in Scandinavia to prevent its use as an enemy base against the United Kingdom"³⁹ as one of five naval tasks to be carried out in the first six weeks of a war. Another important naval task in the early stages of a war was the "deployment of minelaying and light surface forces to shut the Baltic for as long as possible".⁴⁰ On 10 November 1953, in an important Radical Review meeting convened to discuss the future role of fleet carriers, Duncan Sandys, Minister of Supply, strongly opposed the Navy's carrier programme. Sandys stated that "as he understood the position, fleet carriers were required for three main purposes".⁴¹ These were: firstly, the defence of Norway; secondly, offensive operations against enemy bases in the Baltic and the North Sea; and thirdly, protection of Atlantic

convoys against long-range Soviet raiders. According to Sandys, none of these constituted valid reasons for maintaining fleet carriers with their full complement of advanced and costly aircraft. Offensive operations against enemy bases and convoy protection against raiders could be performed by land-based aircraft. Moreover, for the protection of convoys, Sandys added that "the US Fleet could also be relied upon".⁴² Most interesting, however, were Sandys's grounds for dismissing the first argument which in his opinion sustained the requirement for heavy carriers: the defence of Norway. Sandys's reasoning in this respect is of particular significance in view of his subsequent appointment, under the premiership of Harold Macmillan, to the post of Minister of Defence. The defence of Norway, in the words of Sandys, "might or might not be a feasible operation but it was ... one which as a matter of strategic priority bore no relation to the defence of Western Europe or of the United Kingdom".⁴³

In spite of Sandys's open attack on the Navy's carrier programme in late 1953, the Naval Staff continued to argue that Britain's Strike Fleet contribution should constitute the Navy's principal wartime commitment. The chief strategic rationale for maintaining fleet carriers as part of the Strike Fleet, emphasized by Admiralty representatives in COS and Cabinet discussions about the future of Britain's heavy carriers, was that only the Royal Navy would be able to operate in Northern Waters during the first 15 days of war, the critical opening phase of a conflict. In a memorandum prepared in time for the aforementioned Radical Review meeting, the First Lord of the Admiralty, James P.L. Thomas, pointed out that until the American attack carriers could reach the Eastern side of the Atlantic, "... the British element will need to hold the ring".⁴⁴ This was reiterated by Thomas a month later when he again observed that without fleet carriers, the East Atlantic would be without a covering force for the first crucial fourteen days of war.⁴⁵ Moreover, Thomas felt that by giving up the heavy carriers, Britain would also forfeit her ability "... to influence American naval planning in NATO".⁴⁶

The wartime role envisaged for British fleet carriers was to attack at source all "threats to sea communications", the principal categories of which included: submarines and their base facilities, surface vessels in harbour, airfields and aircraft on the ground and communications and waterways such as the Baltic-White Sea Canal.⁴⁷ In late December 1953, the Admiralty, somewhat surprisingly, received support from the Air Ministry for the claim - which Sandys had tried so hard to undermine - that carrier-based aircraft were in fact better suited to undertake missions in Northern Waters and Scandinavia than were shore-based aircraft.⁴⁸ On 22 December, in a meeting between the First Sea Lord, Admiral Sir Roderick McGrigor, and the Chief of Air Staff, Sir William Dickson, the latter agreed that for "attacks on Russian northern bases and communications", fighter escorted strikes from carriers might be more effective than attacks at extreme range by Bomber Command. Furthermore the CAS agreed that carrier aircraft were better suited for accurate minelaying in the Norwegian leads.⁴⁹ The notes of this conversation further demonstrate the Navy's preeminent interest in and commitment to operations in and around Scandinavia. Still, as Eric Groves points out, between 1951 and 1957, Britain's *actual* contribution to Strike Fleet operations was confined largely to the provision of fighter cover and anti-submarine protection.⁵⁰ Admiralty planners, however, argued that technological advances in the field of aircraft and carrier construction, guided weapons and submarines would place an even greater premium on *offensive strategies* for the control of sea communications in the future. A paper forwarded to Admiral McGrigor in February 1954, dealing with the likely effects of scientific developments "on the pattern of naval warfare" observed:

In war it will again be imperative to develop at the earliest propitious moment offensive operations against the enemy's maritime forces at sea and in their bases and to destroy the enemy bases.

As part of such an offensive strategy for the control of sea communications, attacks by a Carrier Striking Force will be necessary to supplement attacks by land based aircraft ...⁵¹

It was on the basis of these arguments that the Naval Staff stressed the importance of developing nuclear-capable fighter aircraft, such as the N113 (Scimitar) and DH110 (Sea Vixen), and strike aircraft such as the NA39 (Buccaneer). The N113 and DH110 - high-performance aircraft intended to replace the "Sea Hawk" and the "Sea Venom" - would be designed specifically to counter the growing strength of Soviet naval aviation operating with the 4th Fleet Air Force (South Baltic Sea), 8th Fleet Air Force (North Baltic Sea) and the Northern Fleet Air Force (White Sea).⁵² In late 1953, J.P. Thomas warned that even at present, Russian Type 35 bombers from "bases in Norway or Northern Denmark" could reach most of the south western approaches to the UK without flying within the combat range of any shore-based fighters.⁵³ From 1954 onwards, British, American and Norwegian concerns about the growing potential of Soviet naval aviation increased further, following the emergence of the BADGER medium bomber, and the gradual introduction of FARMER and FLASHLIGHT fighters into naval units.⁵⁴ The Naval Staff maintained that only the development of DH110 and the N113 - with advanced airborne radar for all-weather performance - could meet the requirement generated by the Soviet naval air threat from Soviet Baltic and northern bases. More advanced British *strike* aircraft, such as the NA39, would represent an effective "anti-Sverdlov" platform, while also being capable of dropping "small atomic bombs ... within a few hundred miles of the enemy coast".⁵⁵ With these weapon-systems fully developed, so the Admiralty argued, Britain would be in a much stronger position to influence the conduct of Strike Fleet operations and more general NATO naval strategy.

In spite of Sandys's attack on the carrier programme in late 1953 and renewed criticism in 1954 of the Navy's programme (notably by the Swinton Committee), the Admiralty was not prepared to abandon its commitment to a Strike fleet strategy.⁵⁶ An important victory seemed to have been won in early 1955 when the Defence Committee accepted the arguments of the Navy and ruled out cuts in the Fleet Air Arm as a means of saving money.⁵⁷ Having been asked to consider the long-term strategic role of the Fleet Air Arm, the Minister of Defence, Harold Macmillan, produced a memorandum on 7 January 1955 on the subject for the Defence Committee. Macmillan concluded that savings incurred by converting heavy carriers into light carriers without a full complement of aircraft, would not outweigh the benefits of continuing to produce two heavy carriers for the Strike Fleet (a third, Macmillan pointed out, had already been asked for by SAC-LANT). In the memorandum, Macmillan specifically mentioned the need to consider the effect of any change of plans concerning carriers to NATO on the Scandinavian members of NATO. As with the carrier debate in late 1953, it was successfully argued that without British carriers on the European side of the Atlantic there would be no means of "operating in waters subject to heavy enemy air attack and outside the range of shore-based air cover" until the US section of the fleet arrived. The Committee accepted that Britain's commitment of fleet carriers to NATO put her in a position to influence overall NATO naval strategy and thus to affect decisions concerning the employment of the Strike Fleet itself.⁵⁸ In the debate on the Naval Estimates in the House of Commons some months later, the First Lord, J.P.L. Thomas, again emphasized the merits of the carrier battle group as "a self-protecting, largely self-contained mobile airfield" in a nuclear war.⁵⁹

What, then, can be said about the specific tasks assigned to British maritime forces in the north, tasks involving Norwegian territory, bases and supply facilities in the event of war?

British documents from late 1953 refer to the existence of "a SACLANT plan" in which the Royal Navy was to take part in carrying out "attacks on Russian Northern bases".⁶⁰ The actual plan and the targets involved are not specified, though a good indication of the mission envisaged for the British in the Far North and Norway's role in it, can be found in a US Navy brief on Allied mining plans for 1955.⁶¹ Since the establishment of ACLANT in 1952, one of SACLANT's highest priorities in the "emergency phase" of general war (D-Day through D+6 months) was to reduce substantially the Soviet "submarine menace" through offensive aircraft, surface and submarine mining operations.⁶² In this endeavour, Norway played a critical role, providing staging bases for U.S. and U.K. naval "patrol bombers" assigned targets on the Kola Peninsula, in the Kola Inlet and in the White Sea Entrance. In SACLANT's offensive mining plan for 1955, 20 British *Lincoln* bombers under national control would be assigned to SACLANT for "specific Pechenga-Murmansk mining".⁶³ Broadly defined, their mission was to conduct, in conjunction with U.S. naval aircraft, "an early mining campaign in order to inflict maximum casualties on enemy ships, particularly U-boats, and to limit the freedom of movement of enemy shipping".⁶⁴ More specifically, two wartime missions, to be initiated immediately upon the commencement of hostilities, were given to the *Lincoln* maritime bombers. The first was to establish "sustained attrition minefields" in the Murmansk approach channel by aircraft staged through Northern Norway. The second task was to establish "limited attrition minefields" on both sides of the Kola Inlet (off Polyarny, Vayenga, Tyuva Guba, Pechenga) and off Yokanga. The second task would be done by aircraft staged from Andøya and other "Norwegian bases".⁶⁵ With the Strike Fleet itself, the UK had assigned 28 *Wyvern* strike aircraft and 16 turbo-prop *Gannets*. These carrier-based aircraft were also allocated for the early and critical minelaying campaign. British submarines, which until early 1957 were conducting reconnaissance and intelligence operations along the Murmansk coast⁶⁶ were also given

specific wartime missions in the Arctic oceans. Submarines based on the Clyde would establish transitory attrition minefields in the White Sea entrance, off the Murmansk coast, in the Kola Inlet and Pechenga approaches. Furthermore, Allied submarines would lay deep anti-U-boat barriers in portions of the Greenland-Iceland-Scotland area; one in the Denmark Strait and one east of Iceland.⁶⁷ Finally, SACLANT forces would assist SACEUR in establishing a mine barrier in the Baltic exits.

1.3. Direct assistance to Norway and the concept of "broken-backed" hostilities

The Strike Fleet strategy advocated by the Admiralty was essentially concerned with the first phase of global war. Though the Navy placed much emphasis on attack at source at the outset of a war, the wartime roles envisaged for fleet carriers in "Northern Waters", spelled out in late 1953 and already rehearsed in MAINBRACE, also included the disruption of "any attempt by the enemy to support land and amphibious operations with major surface units".⁶⁸ The principal reason put forward by the Admiralty in favour of maintaining direct commitments to Norway was this: successful land operations in Norway, especially in the Far North, would give the Soviet navy extremely valuable submarine bases, from which they could prosecute the war during the period of "broken-backed" hostilities.⁶⁹ This concept of "broken-backed" warfare had successfully been championed by the First Sea Lord, Admiral Sir Rhoderick McGrigor, during the global strategy discussions held by the COS in 1952. In the final draft of the Global Strategy paper, the COS concluded that:

... future war would begin with a short period of great intensity which would be followed, if a decision had not been reached in the first period, by an indefinite period of broken-backed hostilities

during which both sides would seek to recuperate from the wounds they had sustained and to recover strength from a further intensive effort.⁷⁰

It was acceptance of this long-war scenario by Sir John Slessor, Chief of Air Staff, which had enabled the First Sea Lord to accept the overall conclusion of the Global Strategy review: increased emphasis on nuclear weapons in British strategic policy. The term "broken-backed" appeared in the 1954 Defence White Paper, and though it was removed from the Defence White Paper for 1955 in favour of a more exclusive stress on "the deterrent", the Navy continued to stress the importance of sea power in "a period of broken-backed warfare ... during which the opposing sides would seek to recover their strength ..." in preparation for the decisive battle.⁷¹ Even during the White Paper discussions of April 1957, the Navy showed no intention of giving up its commitment to "broken-backed" warfare. It was argued that after the initial nuclear exchange, the Navy would still have to confront the Soviet submarine threat.⁷²

From the Admiralty's point of view, endorsement of this concept heightened the importance of providing assistance to NATO Allies in Scandinavia, since during the phase of "broken-backed" war, the main theatre of operations would be at sea. Of particular concern was the very large number of Soviet submarines which Admiralty planners believed were likely to survive the opening phase of a nuclear exchange. In the more protracted phase of "broken-backed" hostilities, these would then be in a position to conduct an intensive campaign against Western sea communications. In addition, having confronted the German fleet-in-being strategy in the North Atlantic during the Second World War, the Royal Navy also appears to have been far more concerned than the US Navy about the threat posed by Soviet surface raiders. If cruisers of the 16,000 ton *Sverdlov* class succeeded in dispersing before the outbreak of a conflict, they could easily be tucked away in Norwegian fjords, as had German battleships, pocket-

battleships and battle cruisers including *Tirpitz*, *Admiral Hipper*, *Lützow*, *Admiral Scheer* and *Prinz Eugen*, during much of the war.⁷³ Against this background of a dual surface and subsurface threat, closing the Baltic and preventing the Soviet Northern Fleet from acquiring bases along the north Norwegian coast became stated Admiralty objectives in war.⁷⁴ During NATO's annual Command Post Exercise in April 1957 (CPX 7), Lord Mountbatten spent some time explaining his case to SACLANT and other senior NATO commanders. The Soviet submarine fleet, Mountbatten argued, was the "master card" which the Russians held up their sleeve. The reason was simple. Following the first exchange of thermo-nuclear bombing "the Russian submarines, all of whom will have been at sea before the war started, if the Russians started it ... will still be there". The second stage of war, Mountbatten argued, could "go on for a year at least, perhaps two". The Russians had already built 27 submarine depot ships and they were building more. Moreover, submarines could be "tucked away in all the inlets of the North Coast of Russia, and indeed, if they have Norway in their hands, in Norway".⁷⁵

It should be added, however, that while these considerations led the Naval Staff to stress the need for *direct* support to Norway, the unavailability of fast carriers in "sufficient" numbers (as defined by SACLANT) and the growth of Soviet naval power, meant that, increasingly, priorities had to be spelled out more explicitly. Consequently, although plans and exercises continued to emphasize the importance of carrier-based support for the land-battle in Norway,⁷⁶ the need to secure sea control by "materially reducing" land-based threats to sea communications received higher priority than the direct defence of Norway. When the First Sea Lord countered criticism of the Fleet Air Arm raised by the Swinton Committee in 1954, he argued that as an "extra role" British carriers would help defend Norway against amphibious attack, although this was "only incidental to the primary strategic role of defeating the Soviet surface fleet".⁷⁷ Still, as indicated, joint planning and combined exercises involving maritime support

to the land areas of Norway and Denmark continued after 1953, though not on the same scale as MAINBRACE. In May 1954, a "major conference" was held in Northwood with CINCNORTH representatives discussing the employment of the UK element of the Strike Fleet in the NEC area.⁷⁸ In September 1954, the tasks which the Admiralty Plans Division had outlined in the summer of 1953 were rehearsed by British forces in the NATO exercise, MORNING MIST. One phase of this exercise (Northern Mist) was conducted by COMNORLANT and practised the sailing of a convoy from Methil (Scotland) to Kristiansand (South Norway) in conjunction with minelaying and mine sweeping activities.⁷⁹

1.4. The appeal to history and opposition to naval commitments in the Far North

The Strike Fleet concept, with its emphasis on offensive operations alongside US carriers, clearly had greater appeal to the Naval Staff than the earlier postwar emphasis on convoy escort tasks to protect shipping. The Strike Fleet was more of a "battle fleet", whose mission would be to seek out and destroy the enemy, thus acting more in the Mahanian tradition of gaining command of the sea through decisive fleet action. The Royal Navy had a historical tradition of involvement and responsibility in the Northern Waters, to which the Admiralty consciously appealed when arguing their case for a Strike Fleet strategy, preparations for "broken-backed" war, and, more generally, for a commitment to Allies in Scandinavia.⁸⁰ Of particular importance were the recent experiences of wartime operations in the Norwegian and Arctic seas. In April 1940, the principal large-scale Anglo-German naval engagement in European waters had taken place in the approaches to Narvik.⁸¹ Throughout the war itself, Germany's fleet-in-being strategy had forced the Royal Navy to maintain a strong presence in the North Atlantic, both to support the convoy runs to Murmansk and to seek out enemy surface raiders.⁸² Combined Operations had been carried out along the Norwegian coast,

and in late 1941, Lord Mountbatten, as Commodore Combined Operations, planned the raid against the Norwegian island of Vågsøy, significant as "the first operation in which all three Services were truly interwoven in planning and execution".⁸³ In the first week of May 1945, the last major wartime operation carried out by the Home Fleet, led by Rear-Admiral Rhoderick McGrigor (First Sea Lord, 1951-54), took place in the Vestfjord. In a series of accurate and successful attacks, *Avengers* and *Wildcats* of the Fleet Air Arm inflicted heavy damage on base installations supporting the German Arctic U-boat flotilla, including the destruction of the submarine depot ship, *Black Watch*, in the Kilbotn fjord.⁸⁴

Given this legacy of involvement in the Far North it is not surprising that the appeal to history was used by Navy representatives when they sought to highlight the strategic value of Scandinavia.⁸⁵ It was typically expressed in an aforementioned memorandum by the First Lord of the Admiralty, J.P.L. Thomas, concerning the role of carriers. Having described the "main function of our Fleet Carriers ... as a contribution to the 'Striking Fleet'", Thomas went on to portray the role of the Strike Fleet as:-

... analogous to that of the Grand Fleet of World War I and the British Home Fleet of World War II, namely the offensive force for Atlantic and Northern Waters ...

There was more to this, however, than simply a question of previous involvement in the area. During the Second World War, "lessons" had been learned which Admiralty planners felt were highly relevant to an understanding of the implications of the growth of Soviet naval power in Northern Europe in the 1950s.⁸⁶ *Firstly*, the experience of operating in Norwegian and Arctic seas after the end of the Norwegian campaign, had left the Admiralty staff keenly appreciative of the enormous tactical advantage held by the Germans in combining shore-based air reconnaissance and strike forces, powerful surface

raiders and submarines all operating out of bases in Norway.⁸⁷ If enemy forces were to acquire bases in North Norway, they would not only advance their bomb line further west, but their submarines and surface raiders would pose a most serious threat to Allied sea lanes of communications. Such arguments, derived from the operational experience of the Home Fleet and used by the Admiralty in internal debates between 1951 and 1957, were typically expressed and well illustrated in an article on sea power and aircraft published in Brassey's Annual Year-Book for 1953.⁸⁸ Noting how Germany's capture of western ports and airfields had "greatly multiplied" the pressure of U-boat, raider and direct air attack on shipping, the article emphasized the extreme vulnerability of shipping between the UK and Scandinavia to long-range submarines operating from North Russia, to minelaying aircraft and to "fast heavy cruiser attack easily practicable from ice-free North Russian ports".⁸⁹ In line with the Strike Fleet concept, the article cited the offensive use of naval aircraft from fleet carriers as a necessary countermeasure to the Soviet naval threat.

Secondly, the 'Norwegian campaign' in the spring of 1940 had also brought home more general lessons, two of which were pointed out by Captain S.W. Roskill in his official study of the war at sea, the first volume of which appeared in 1954:-

*The first concerned the effect of air power on the control of the sea. It could no longer be doubted that if effective air cover was lacking, warships could not operate protractedly and the Army could not be maintained overseas. Secondly, there was the old lesson that if a secure base cannot be established in an overseas theatre of war the land campaign cannot prosper.*⁹⁰

According to the Admiralty, technological advances since the war, especially improvements in endurance and all-weather capabilities for aircraft, had only accentuated the relevance of

these "lessons". However, financial pressures, competing defence priorities and relative service independence meant that the Navy's attachment to Norway and the contiguous seas had to coexist - at times uneasily - with other views within the British political and defence establishment. We have already seen how Duncan Sandys in late 1953 argued that one of the principal reasons put forward in defence of maintaining a Fleet Air Arm, the defence of Norway, should not be considered a matter of strategic priority. Non-naval members of the COS and the Joint Planning Staff also remained unconvinced about the merits of maintaining specific commitments in the north, particularly as increasing emphasis was being placed on the "great deterrent". In a report by the Joint Planning Staff in June 1956, it was stated that the British Government hoped to persuade the rest of NATO that a "new political directive" to NATO military authorities was needed. This was to be based on the assumption "that it is the thermo-nuclear bomb that we must rely on for deterring Soviet aggression and also for dealing with the Soviet Union should she ever commit aggression".⁹¹ The new concept envisaged very radical cuts in NATO naval forces. Under this concept, the Strike Fleet armed with thermo-nuclear weapons would be retained as part of the primary deterrent. Except for those maritime forces needed to support the Strike Fleet, however, the Planning Staff felt that "no other maritime forces need be assigned or earmarked for NATO".⁹² As Mountbatten pointed out in a COS meeting convened to discuss the paper, if ever adopted by NATO it would have the "effect of virtually abolishing all NATO navies except for United States striking fleet and its minor United Kingdom component".⁹³ The COS decided to reconsider and redraft the paper.⁹⁴

In April 1957 there was further evidence of limited interest in Norway on the part of the Joint Planning Staff. During the annual Command Post Exercise (CPX 7), Field Marshal Montgomery recommended radical changes to NATO's higher command structure, including a proposal to sever Denmark, the Kattegat and the Baltic from the Northern Command and

include it in the Central European Command.⁹⁵ Montgomery's argument for this reorganisation was principally that Russian naval operations in the Baltic and land operations in Schleswig-Holstein "would be part of one campaign with the object of controlling Denmark and the Straits", and that Allied naval operations could not be conducted from Oslo. The Field Marshal thought it militarily unsound to separate Denmark from Germany when the "closest co-operation between forces from these nations was essential".⁹⁶ Montgomery displayed little understanding of the political sensitivities of smaller NATO Allies, such as Norway.⁹⁷ While his proposal might have made military sense within the context of current Standing Group assessment of "Soviet capabilities and probable courses of action", it was bound to be politically unacceptable to both the Norwegians and the Danes. Norway was already concerned about effectively being "decoupled" from the central European front. In Denmark, Sir Frank Roberts noted an obvious "reluctance ... to be divorced from Norway and put in with Germany".⁹⁸ None of this was appreciated by Montgomery, who had a strong tendency to think exclusively in terms of what made "military sense".⁹⁹ In this instance, however, it was the view of the Joint Planning Staff that was most interesting. Montgomery's proposal, which would have meant that Norway alone would constitute NATO's Northern Command, was seen as "*desirable*" by the Joint Planning Staff, though subject to SACEUR's views.

In spite of these differences within the defence establishment, until Duncan Sandys imposed his priorities on the services, Navy representatives such as Rear Admiral Sir Anthony Buzzard continued to emphasize Britain's responsibilities in Northern Waters. Though not always representative of Admiralty opinion, Buzzard, while still the Director of Naval Intelligence, stressed the importance of holding Norway in the event of war. Criticizing what he regarded as excessive reliance on the immediate resort to US strategic air power, Buzzard, in July 1953, argued that the "'survival period' [in a war with the USSR] ... should be defined as up to a year,

and NATO should deploy conventional forces sufficient at least to hold Scandinavia or France".¹⁰⁰ In April 1955, having retired as head of Naval Intelligence, Buzzard sent General Alfred M. Gruenther a "study of the problem of how to use the 'H'-bomb and other weapons of mass destruction".¹⁰¹ Again, he questioned the credibility of "our present policy of Massive Retaliation", arguing specifically that the Russians might well consider that they could get away with "an excursion into Greece or Northern Norway, to oppose which - they might calculate - the American people would not be prepared to put up with hydrogen attack on their cities".¹⁰² In so far as Buzzard was hoping to draw attention to the vulnerability of the flanks under a concept of "massive retaliation", he made little headway. It was only after 1957 that this argument resurfaced, the principal proponent then being the American and not the British Navy.

Even before the Defence Review of 1957, it was becoming clear that defence priorities were likely to change in a way that would affect the Royal Navy's traditional commitment in the North. In October 1956, the British Prime Minister, Anthony Eden, was prepared to discuss the issue, if only in an indirect way, during his meeting with his Norwegian counterpart, Einar Gerhardsen. Under the discussion item entitled "N.A.T.O. The Strategic Reappraisal," Eden's brief read:

*The means of defence have changed with the vast increase in nuclear weapons; and so has the nature of the threat, which is now more strongly directed through economic means towards Asia and the Middle East. This problem is of particular interest to the United Kingdom. We should be doing a disservice to our N.A.T.O. partners if we overestimated our own economy and had not the economic resources and military strength to support our friends and guard our interests in those areas.*¹⁰³

II. SCALING DOWN BRITISH NAVAL COMMITMENTS IN THE NORTH ATLANTIC, 1957-60

*"Any diminution in the Royal Navy or in the strike role or the anti-submarine warfare role means that the tasks which must be done will fall more heavily on our shoulders."*¹⁰⁴

Admiral Arleigh Burke to Admiral Lord Mountbatten, February 1958

2.1. Naval implications of the 1957 British Defence White Paper

In early January 1957, the financial crisis precipitated by the Suez debacle, prompted Harold Macmillan to accelerate the Long Term Defence Review process initiated by Churchill's Conservative administration in 1952. To coordinate the process, Macmillan appointed Churchill's son-in-law, Duncan Sandys, as his new Minister of Defence. The outcome of the review was the April 1957 Defence White Paper, designed to "revise not merely the size, but the character of the defence plan".¹⁰⁵ Sandys's White Paper, as it came to be known, argued centrally that advances in weapons technology meant that "the only existing safeguard against major aggression is the power to threaten retaliation with nuclear weapons".¹⁰⁶ Greater emphasis on the "deterrent" and nuclear weapons in British strategic policy would ensure substantial savings in defence expenditure. In fact, the *principal* rationale behind the White Paper was Sandys's and Macmillan's desire to secure financial savings by reducing manpower. As such, the document was motivated more by economic factors than by any coherent set of strategic considerations.¹⁰⁷

There was, in essence, nothing very new about these arguments. The Defence White Paper codified ideas that had first been adumbrated in the Global Strategy Paper of 1952, namely, that "while conventional forces were to be retained to guard against threats to Britain's world-wide interests and as a partial deterrent to aggression in Europe, the main emphasis of Britain's global strategy was to be placed on the deterrent and operational capabilities of nuclear weapons with conventional forces of reduced size".¹⁰⁸ Yet while Sandys's ideas may not have been very novel, the original Global Strategy Paper had not been followed up by any significant change in the balance of conventional and nuclear forces.¹⁰⁹ Concessions made to the Army and the Navy, such as the concept of "broken-backed" hostilities, meant that little actual change had taken place in Britain's overall force structure between 1952 and 1957. The real significance of Sandys's reforms, therefore, lay in the fact that only in 1957 did "a major change in the extant equilibrium of nuclear-conventional forces ... take place and a 'New Look' force posture reflecting added emphasis on nuclear weapons and decreased conventional forces ... come into being".¹¹⁰ Unlike Lord Alexander and Anthony Head before him, Duncan Sandys, with enhanced institutional power and strong personal backing from Macmillan, was able to impose his priorities on the services. This meant that forces designed for use in global war would have to be cut or, where possible, redirected towards limited and cold war functions in support of residual colonial commitments and treaty obligations outside Europe.¹¹¹ As the Joint Planning Staff accurately noted in a report circulated to the COS on 8 May 1957:

*... the Defence White Paper, which is based primarily on economic necessity, assumes that since global war is unlikely so long as the deterrent remains effective, priority in the deployment of our resources after our contribution to the deterrent, must be geared to cold and limited war tasks.*¹¹²

Given these priorities and Sandys's known hostility to the carrier, the Naval Staff had to provide a case for the retention of carriers which *did not* emphasize their role in a general war with the Soviet Union. Consequently, the Admiralty chose not to stress the value of carriers as nuclear platforms in global war, even though advanced fighter and strike aircraft - the Scimitar, the Sea Vixen and NA39 - were all in advanced stages of development. In part, this decision was a recognition of the fact that British carriers, of limited strike potential compared to their US counterparts entering service after 1955 (the *Forrestal* class), were becoming increasingly vulnerable to Soviet air and submarine forces in Northern Europe. Sandys's hostility to the Strike Fleet concept, however, added to the need for an alternative basis on which to rest the case for the Fleet Air Arm.¹¹³

Stressing the value of carriers as "means of applying air power in areas where other means cannot be efficiently or economically based",¹¹⁴ the Admiralty chose to focus on their role in limited war and cold war operations east of Suez. In a report by the Joint Planning Staff circulated for consideration by the Chiefs of Staff on 18 February, the east of Suez scenario was prominent. Whilst stressing the "serious blow" to political cohesion within NATO resulting from a removal of carriers from the Strike Fleet, the report placed emphasis on the contribution that carriers would make to the maintenance of the territorial integrity and internal security of colonial territories and dependencies overseas. It was an effective argument given that Sandys had insisted on maintaining all British defence *commitments* in the Middle and Far East while simultaneously reducing the size of army garrisons overseas.¹¹⁵ The report's conclusion, that the Fleet Air Arm should be retained, was unanimously approved by the COS Committee the following day; a "major victory" for the Admiralty.¹¹⁶ Thus while the White Paper envisaged reductions in the reserve fleet and Navy's shore establishments and ruled out a renewal of the cruiser fleet, British naval strength east of Suez was to

be maintained at *existing levels*. Cutbacks would have to be made in the Mediterranean and Home Fleets.¹¹⁷

2.2. The White Paper and Britain's naval contribution to NATO

The centrality of the "deterrent" in the White Paper notwithstanding, the basis for Britain's naval contribution to NATO was justified by a reference to what was, in effect, a watered-down version of the "broken-backed war" argument championed by the Navy since 1952. Although the term itself was not used, and had not appeared in any White Paper since 1954, Sandys did allow for the "... possibility that the nuclear battle might not prove immediately decisive; and in that event it would be of great importance to defend Atlantic communications against submarine attack". The logic of the argument was for Britain to concentrate more exclusively on anti-submarine warfare operations using light carriers. The consequent process of reordering naval priorities continued throughout 1957, and, in November, Lord Mountbatten formally accepted that forces west of Suez should be geared towards anti-submarine operations.¹¹⁸ This was confirmed in January 1958, in the first draft of the 1958 Defence White Paper on the role of the Navy. The draft explained how the "Western Fleet" of the Navy should concentrate on strengthening NATO's ASW capability and that this effort would be "at the expense of the air defence and strike role in the Atlantic".¹¹⁹ The 'concept of balanced collective forces' was not, however, to be applied east of Suez, where "all purpose naval forces at about their present level" would be maintained.¹²⁰ Even though the ASW commitment to NATO was emphasized by Sandys, this role was clearly secondary to the focus on limited war scenarios east of Suez. As a result the Royal Navy, according to Crowe, "turned away from NATO", and continued to do so under Sandys's successor, Harold Watkinson, who assumed office in 1959.¹²¹ While this reordering of priorities was neither as dramatic nor as sudden as Crowe

seems to suggest, the general change of priorities heralded by the Defence White Paper could not be denied. Moreover, although British defence officials did stress their continued commitment to NATO, there is little doubt that the *perception* that Britain was reducing her Alliance commitments too rapidly was taking root within NATO (however unjustified in terms of Britain's economic predicament).

In late January 1957, John Foster Dulles, in a meeting with Duncan Sandys in Washington, "expressed the hope" that the "proposed UK armament cuts ... could be worked out in a way which would minimize the shock to NATO".¹²² Sandys replied that while he certainly hoped this could be done, the "cut had to come irrespective of NATO".¹²³ Reactions within NATO, as Dulles had predicted, were felt almost immediately. In a Chiefs of Staff meeting held on 12 April, Lord Mountbatten referred to a telegram he had received from CINCPACMED saying "there had been a profound shock throughout his NATO command at what was regarded as a unilateral action by one member nation which could not but weaken the structure of NATO".¹²⁴ Referring to further British naval cuts in early 1958, one US commentator wrote that a "growing body of NATO opinion feels the economy-backed British Navy has left a gaping hole in the North Atlantic".¹²⁵ As British representatives presented the "United Kingdom case" during NATO's *Annual Review* meetings between 1957 and 1960, growing Allied concern about what was seen to be a diminishing NATO commitment on the part of Britain was registered by the Chiefs of Staff. The COS nonetheless reaffirmed the strategic priorities laid down in the 1957 White Paper.¹²⁶

British naval cuts and re-deployments in the period between 1957 and 1960 had both direct and indirect consequences for Norway. *First*, the emphasis on naval responsibilities east of Suez, a policy to which the Government's commitment only increased in the years following the defence review, inevitably meant a reduction of Britain's naval contribution in the North

Atlantic. When preparing the UK reply to the 1958 Annual Review, the COS noted how "as a result of recent decisions ... the Far Eastern Fleet has increased at the expense of the Home and Mediterranean fleets".¹²⁷ Given the maritime nature of the Northern European Command area, this was in itself a disconcerting trend. *Secondly*, changes in British naval policy also had more direct consequences. When in 1960 the fast minelayer *HMS Apollo* was decommissioned, CINCNORTH's mining plan for the Kattegat, known as the "APOLLO PLAN", became obsolete.¹²⁸ The successful accomplishment of this plan in war was deemed to be vitally important in terms of "bottling up" the Soviet Baltic Fleet. As the plan became obsolete, General Norstad was requested, in May 1961, to review all mining plans for the Kattegat with a view to possibly reducing the total mining requirement and to approach the Norwegian Ministry of Defence asking that it assume user nation functions.¹²⁹ The third and most important consequence for Norway of changes in British naval policy was *indirect*; namely, the growth of US military activity and commitments in the North Atlantic. It is worth noting here that during the defence review process Mr Sandys, according to Sir Richard Powell's recollection, "felt that if the need arose the Americans could and would fill any gaps in Atlantic naval defences that the reductions in British naval strength had opened".¹³⁰

2.3. US Navy reactions to British naval cuts in European waters - implications for Norway and the maritime balance in Northern Waters

The reactions of the US Navy to the naval implications of Sandys's defence review and the pressure for further cuts after April 1957, may be seen as going through two stages. The first of these lasted through the summer of 1957 and started even before the White Paper was publicly presented. This was a period of *clarification*, that is, a period during which US officials, representing not only the Navy but also

other branches of the administration (notably the White House itself and the State Department), sought to establish exactly what would be the size, nature and implications of the proposed cuts. The second phase ran through the autumn of 1957 and into the first half of 1958 and was characterized by a sense of deepening US concern about changes in the balance of maritime forces in the eastern Atlantic area. As we shall see, in the autumn of 1957, it was the *conclusions drawn from an analysis* of two specific events which most strongly influenced the development of American attitudes. The first of these was a series of NATO maritime exercises - STRIKE BACK, SEA WATCH and STAND FIRM - held in the eastern Atlantic in September. The second event, in October, was the successful launching of a Soviet earth satellite, Sputnik I, from a rocket test facility near Tyuratam in Soviet central Asia.

January 1957 - September 1957. When Harold Macmillan met President Eisenhower at Bermuda in March 1957 to repair relations after the Suez debacle, he used the opportunity to inform the President about the estimated reductions attendant upon implementation of the forthcoming White Paper. With regard to naval forces, Macmillan told Eisenhower that the British D-day contribution to SACLANT would be cut by *one third*, though more detailed disclosures were not made.¹³¹ The President for his part, raised the issue of the "... reductions in the Royal Navy and the gap that they would leave in the North Atlantic".¹³² In particular, Eisenhower stressed the importance of the United Kingdom controlling the sea area between Scotland and Iceland, and Sir Richard Powell, Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Defence, told the COS on 12 April that the Prime Minister had personally accepted this as an "undertaking".¹³³ In spite of Macmillan's promise concerning the area between Iceland and Scotland, Admiral Sir Michael Denny, Head of the British Joint Services Mission in Washington, told the COS that while the Bermuda conference had been useful in terms of outlining the logic behind the White Paper to the Americans, there was likely to be "strong

criticisms from the Department of defence when they realised the ultimate reductions in the size of our forces".¹³⁴ In particular, Denny noted, there would be "strong repercussions when the United States Navy appreciated the magnitude of our reductions".¹³⁵ At the conclusion of the meeting, the Chiefs endorsed Sir Richard Powell's suggestion that Lord Mountbatten and the Chief of Air Staff, Sir Dermot Boyle, should inform SACLANT "candidly ... at the first convenient opportunity" what the British reductions in naval and maritime air forces were going to be.

The opportunity to do so arose on 7 May, when Admiral Jerauld Wright, hoping for more details about the schedule and scale of UK naval reductions, met the COS in London.¹³⁶ Admiral Wright was particularly anxious to know whether British carriers allotted to his command would be *strike* or ASW carriers. Lord Mountbatten explained that their precise role could not be stated since they had also to be prepared to undertake "various roles in cold and limited war".¹³⁷ Still, two carrier groups would "probably" be made available for SACLANT in the event of global war. Sir Dermot Boyle was more specific and reported that maritime aircraft for SACLANT, most of which were assigned missions in and around Norway, were to be reduced to 72 in 1957, to 54 by December 1958 and to 42 by December 1959.¹³⁸

The source of SACLANT's worries at this particular time was clearly revealed to the COS the following day in a report concerning SACLANT's recent deployment plans, circulated by the Joint Planning Staff. The Joint Planning Staff pointed out how the "introduction of the missile-carrying submarine has caused SACLANT to place increased emphasis on the importance of the Forward Defence Zone", and that he "now indicates that he will require considerable United Kingdom naval forces to be stationed in peacetime to detect submarines and prevent their deployment to wartime stations".¹³⁹ In fact, Admiral Wright had told members of the COS the previous day that, given the potential threat from Soviet guided missile

submarines, UK naval reductions had come at a time when D-Day force readiness "was even more important and force requirements were in fact increasing".¹⁴⁰ Yet, as the Planning Staff pointed out, British Long Term Defence Policy foresaw a marked reduction in the number of United Kingdom naval forces earmarked for the eastern Atlantic.¹⁴¹ The Planning Staff could see no likelihood of British anti-submarine vessels being made available in "peacetime for the specific task of detecting the deployment of Russian missile submarines".¹⁴² Lord Mountbatten's comments at the COS meeting convened to discuss the report clearly point to the tensions that had arisen between US and British priorities. According to the First Sea Lord, SACLANT wanted:

*... ships and maritime aircraft permanently available in peacetime to give early warning of the move of Soviet submarines. These we should not be able to provide. SACLANT also wanted all D-Day naval forces on station in peacetime. Such a requirement would conflict with our policy of earmarking the majority of our naval forces to NATO, and using them world wide.*¹⁴³

September 1957 - May 1958. The second leg of the US Navy's response to British cuts occurred in the autumn and were related to the "semi-successful"¹⁴⁴ conclusion of a series of maritime exercises held in the North Atlantic.

The main aim of STRIKE BACK, which began on 19 September, was to practise offensive carrier operations against shore targets while "avoiding attacking submarines, hostile surface ships and beating off attacks by land-based aircraft".¹⁴⁵ The Strike Fleet - led by Vice Admiral Robert Pirie on board the flagship *USS Northampton* and with airpower provided by the new American "super-carriers," *USS Forrestal (CVA-59)* and *USS Saratoga (CVA-60)*, as well as by the British fleet carrier *HMS Eagle* - simulated nuclear attacks against land-targets in Norway. Exercise STRIKE BACK, during which the

Strike Fleet operated in the North Norwegian Sea with some units crossing the parallel of 70 degrees north, revealed serious deficiencies in communications and logistics under Arctic conditions.¹⁴⁶ Abnormal ionospheric conditions at times completely severed communications between shore and fleet. This led to increased efforts - efforts which continued throughout 1958 and 1959 - to upgrade communication facilities and installations in Norway in order to provide support for both *defensive* and *offensive* Strike Fleet operations. For defensive purposes these shore-based stations were vital in terms of forwarding early warning information to the fleet about Soviet naval air activities. Their importance in this respect only grew as the decade wore on and naval air forces at Murmansk received modern jet aircraft, such as the Badger, specifically tailored to counter US carrier groups in the North Atlantic.¹⁴⁷ The potential importance of Norwegian shore installations for offensive purposes was indicated by a representative of CINCEASTLANT in Paris in November 1958, who reported that CINCEASTLANT forces planned to utilize control and reporting systems within the Northern European Command area for routing tactical bombers to forward directors.¹⁴⁸ Exercise STRIKE BACK was significant therefore also in the sense that it demonstrated the importance of Norway in Strike Fleet operations.

It was, however, in exercise SEA WATCH that the "... most glaring weakness in NATO naval capability was uncovered".¹⁴⁹ During the exercise, which was designed to test the ability to keep sea lanes of communications across the Atlantic open through the conduct of aggressive anti-submarine warfare, "opposing" submarine forces - including the first nuclear-powered submarine, *USS Nautilus* - "racked up a high score of kills".¹⁵⁰ A classified report by Admiral Sir John Eccles, Commander of the Home Fleet, on the performance of *Nautilus* during one particular phase of the exercise, concluded that the "US Navy, originally sceptical of its capabilities, now regard the nuclear submarine as an entirely new weapon of war".¹⁵¹ The US submarine had successfully simulated attacks

against 16 different ships including two carriers. According to the report, the *Nautilus* alone had "constituted a greater threat to opposing forces than did all other 21 snort fitted submarines put together".¹⁵² The performance of the *USS Nautilus* and its subsequent journey in August 1958 under the polar ice cap, strongly influenced US views about the possibilities for submarine operations in the Arctic.

So depressing were the results from SEA WATCH, that Sir John Eccles and Air Marshal Sir Bryan Reynolds, who jointly led the exercise, were prompted to issue a statement which had the effect of seriously embarrassing the Government by linking the outcome of the exercise to British naval cuts. "At present," Eccles and Reynolds stated bluntly, "we have not enough ships or aircraft to defeat the expected enemy submarine offensive in the Eastern Atlantic area".¹⁵³ At the press conference, Eccles was even more outspoken in his criticisms, saying that "... we have got nothing like enough forces with which to carry out our primary task, either in the air, under the sea or on the sea. We are desperately short of all the hardware needed to fight this battle ...".¹⁵⁴ Clearly aiming his criticism at the Government, Eccles added: "I am not in a position to criticize political decisions, but I say this as a professional man with 40 years' experience. I cannot carry out my task as given to me at the moment without more forces."¹⁵⁵

To the Americans, Admiral Eccles's remarks strongly reinforced existing worries about the debilitating impact of defence cuts on the ability of Britain to carry the initial burden of defence "in its own backyard".¹⁵⁶ In a separate statement, Admiral Jerauld Wright openly supported Eccles's comments concerning the inadequacy of forces in the "front line trenches" of the Eastern Atlantic, thus further embarrassing the British Government.¹⁵⁷ The problem of containing the Soviet submarine "menace" from bases at Murmansk and to a lesser extent the Baltic, which is what this debate was essentially about, was further complicated, in Admiral Wright's

opinion, by the weakness of the Norwegian and Danish navies. In November, this view was publicly supported by CINC-NORTH, General Sir Cecil Sugden.¹⁵⁸

James Grant, a reporter for *The Register* in London, seeking to place Eccles's comments within the broader context of British naval policy in 1957, captured the mood and the general conclusions reached by US defence and administration officials after the exercises:

Despite the defense economy measures here, it had been a commonly accepted myth that Great Britain's naval power could act as the backbone of the bulwark against Soviet sea strike in the critical opening period.

No matter what some authorities contend it is now glaringly obvious that this is impossible.

The crippling cutback in both British naval strength and the slow down in the development of more advanced naval weapons has taken its toll. This policy is, of course, in line with the notion that Western Europe is indefensible anyhow in the face of an all out assault.

For months now, high ranking British naval men have been bridleing in private at this scuttling of UK sea might.

... The lid finally blew off this pressure cooker of frustration with the jolting declaration of Admiral Eccles.¹⁵⁹

These American worries were strongly reinforced by the demonstration of Soviet advances in rocket technology in early October. The launching of Sputnik I and II, while not directly relevant to navy assessments, contributed to a *psychological environment* which seemed to magnify the significance of every measure that appeared to weaken Western capabilities. The threat of Soviet missile-guided submarines - for which there was very little "hard" intelligence - at once seemed more credible. Most importantly, Sputnik showed that the continental United States was no longer impervious to a direct strategic

attack. The fact that the Soviet Union was *at least* three years away from an initial operating capability for ICBMs did not really matter; the crucial premise of "massive retaliation" which had provided it with a *degree* of credibility - that is, the relative invulnerability of the US home land to direct strategic attack - had been removed.

While the "shock" of Sputnik appears to have influenced Eisenhower in the direction of increasing defence cooperation with Britain,¹⁶⁰ it did not have any appreciable impact on the trends in British naval policy. In February 1958, following the publication of the new White Paper and the announcement of further cuts,¹⁶¹ the Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Arleigh Burke, in a letter to Lord Mountbatten expressed his disappointment.

From many previous indications I was aware that you would be forced into accepting significant reductions in your forces, but I was not quite prepared for the shocker contained in the recently published "White Paper".

... It would be inappropriate for me to offer my condolences on this turn of events, and yet I must in all sincerity say I am disturbed to see these drastic reductions in your naval forces at the very time when navies are so important to the accomplishment of our common objectives.¹⁶²

In May, the *Manchester Guardian*, reported on the "disappointment" with which Admiral Jerauld Wright had received the news that Britain would turn carriers west of Suez into helicopter carriers for anti-submarine warfare, thus effectively relinquishing the strike role option.¹⁶³ According to the article this decision had come as a surprise since plans had been far advanced "for the incorporation of some of the finest ships of the Royal Navy into the Atlantic striking fleet, which is now entirely American".¹⁶⁴ The US Navy had been particularly keen

to draw upon the "excellent capabilities" of the Royal Navy in air defence including recent developments in radar.¹⁶⁵

2.4. Concluding thoughts: 1957 as a turning-point in US naval policy in the North Atlantic

Shortly before the disclosure of the 1958 White Paper which so "shocked" Admiral Burke, the Chief of Naval Operations had written to Lord Mountbatten explaining that the frankness with which he felt obliged to express his views was needed, "... because any great modification to your forces will directly and immediately affect the tasks and responsibilities of our Navy".¹⁶⁶ Apart from confirming the weakening of the British position in American eyes, two other aspects of the events in the autumn of 1957 influenced subsequent developments. First, the performance of *USS Nautilus* in the exercises and the launching of Sputnik had the very important effect of demonstrating just how formidable was the potential threat presented by nuclear-powered submarines. Secondly, during STRIKE BACK, the *USS Forrestal* and *USS Saratoga* received their first operational workouts in the Atlantic. These ships not only outsized British fleet carriers, but their nuclear projection capabilities along with the prospective deployment of Fleet Ballistic Missile (POLARIS) submarines in the Norwegian Sea, greatly alarmed the Soviet Union thus bringing Norway more directly to the nexus of superpower military confrontation in the late 1950s.

In the maritime sphere then, 1957 and 1958 represented an important period of transition as seen from the perspective of postwar Norwegian security. An indication of Norway's increased importance in US strategy during this period is found in a letter by President Eisenhower to Sam Rayburn, Speaker of the House of Representatives, on 13 May 1958, following a meeting held in the White House that day with the Prime Minister of Norway, Einar Gerhardsen. The President, commenting upon the meeting, thought it "a fortuitous

circumstance" that both he and Rayburn had opportunities to talk to Gerhardsen, whose country "... is a particularly important factor in all our calculations concerning the defence of the North East Atlantic".¹⁶⁷

Notes

1. Olav Riste, "Isolationism and Great Power Protection - The Historical Determinants of Norwegian Foreign Policy," FHFS Notat 2, 1984, p.3.

2. Olav Riste, *Isolasjonisme og stormaktsgarantier* (Oslo: Forsvarsstudier, IFS, 3/1991), p.47.

3. On the issue of "functional ties", see Magne Skodvin, *Norden eller NATO? Utenriksdepartementet og alliansespørsmålet 1947-1949* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1971), pp.33-34, and Olav Riste, "Functional Ties - a Semi-Alliance ? Military Cooperation in North-West Europe, 1944-47," in *Forsvarsstudier: Årbok for Forsvarshistorisk Forskningsinstitutt 1981* (Oslo: Tanum-Norli, 1981), pp.37-51.

4. Riste, "Isolationism and Great Power Protection," p.10.

5. See, COS discussion of "Future Strategy" in March 1948, COS (48), 39th Mtg., 17 March 1948, DEFE 4/11, PRO, and J. Kent and J. Young, "The Western Union Concept and British Defence Planning 1947-48," Paper presented to conference on "NATO's First Decade", St.John's College, Oxford, 9-12 April, 1990.

6. "Some Notes on the Defence Problem of Britain, by Field Marshal The Viscount Montgomery of Alamein," 30 December 1947, (MF), BLM 183/12, The Montgomery papers, Imperial War Museum, London.

7. "The Problem of Future War and the Strategy of War with Russia, Memorandum by G.I.G.S." 30 January 1948, BLM 183/17, The Montgomery Papers, Imperial War Museum, London.

8. CO (48), 39th Mtg. 17 March 1948, DEFE 4/11, PRO.

9. Rolf Tamnes, "Integration and Screening: The Two Faces of Norwegian Alliance Policy, 1945-1986," in *Forsvarsstudier VI: Årbok for Forsvarshistorisk forskningscenter* (Oslo: Tano, 1987) ed. Rolf Tamnes, p.63.

10. "Scandinavia Defence - Strategic Considerations, Report by the Joint Planning Staff," 4 June 1947, FO 371/65961, PRO. The report had been requested by Robin Hankey, Head of the Northern Department in the Foreign Office.

11. Ibid.
12. Ibid.
13. Clive Archer, *Uncertain Trust: The British-Norwegian Defence Relationship* (Oslo: Forsvarsstudier IFS 2/1989), p.23.
14. E. Grove and G. Till, in *Maritime Strategy and the Balance of Power* (London: Macmillan/St Antony's College,1990),p.276.
15. Rolf Tamnes, "Integration and Screening: The Two Faces of Norwegian Alliance Policy," FHFS Notat 5, 1986, p.10.
16. Memorandum for General Gruenther, 12 March 1952, Gruenther, A. (1), Box 48, D.D. Eisenhower Pre-Presidential Papers, 1916-1952, Eisenhower Library. Less than a year earlier, Montgomery appears to have taken the opposite view, arguing that " 'every effort' to hold the Southern and Northern Flanks ..." should be made in the event of war. See Rolf Tamnes, "Norway's Struggle for the Northern Flank, 1950-52," in *Western Security: The Formative Years, 1947-53*, ed. Olav Riste (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1985), p.219.
17. Clive Archer, *Uncertain Trust: The British-Norwegian Defence Relationship* (IFS: Oslo,1989), p.23. Interview with Vice-Admiral Ronald Brockman, 18 March, 1991, London.
18. Eric J. Grove, *Vanguard to Trident: British Naval Policy Since World War II* (London:The Bodley Head, 1987), p.204.
19. Winston Churchill made this remark in the House of Commons in response to the news that a US Admiral, William M. Fetchler had been selected for the post of Supreme Allied Commander, Atlantic. B.B. Schofield, *British Sea Power: Naval Policy in the Twentieth Century* (London: B.T. Batsford Ltd, 1967), pp.220-221.
20. General D.D. Eisenhower to George C. Marshall, 12 March 1951, *The Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower: NATO and the Campaign of 1952: XIII*, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), p.120.
21. Ibid. p.120.
22. *All Hands (The Bureau of Naval Personnel Information Bulletin)*, No.442, December 1953, p.36.
23. Exercise SEA ENTERPRISE, 21-28 September, 1955, *The ONI Review*, vol.10, no.10, November 1955, NHC. Britain, unlike the Soviet Union, also maintained a very sizeable reserve fleet.

24. The success of carrier operations around the Korean peninsula, particularly close air support for the land-battle, was taken by both the Admiralty and the US Navy as a vindication of the utility of the carrier. Bernard Brodie, *A Guide to Naval Strategy: Fourth (Naval War College) Edition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1958), p. 240. See also, William J. Crowe, "The Policy Roots of the Modern Royal Navy, 1946-1962" (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 1965), pp.128-131.
25. Grove, *Vanguard to Trident*, p.98. On the various factors which contributed to pressure within the Admiralty for a more *offensively-oriented* Fleet Air Arm in the early 1950s, see also, Crowe, "The Policy Roots of the Royal Navy," pp.126-138.
26. Interview with Vice-Admiral Sir Ronald Brockman, 18 March 1991.
27. Michael Dockrill, *British Defence Since 1945* (London: Basil Blackwell, 1988), pp.5-6, and Martin S. Navias, *Nuclear Weapons and British Strategic Planning, 1955-1958* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), pp. 139-140.
28. Navias, *Nuclear Weapons and British Strategic Planning*, p.67. Sir John Slessor also observed at the time that the White Paper of 1957 introduced "no basic revolution in policy," but merely rationalised tendencies "which have long been obvious." Sir John Slessor, "British Defence Policy," *Foreign Affairs* 35 (July 1957), p.551.
29. Navias, *Nuclear Weapons and British Strategic Planning*, p.77.
30. Future Defence Policy: Report by the Chiefs of Staff, 22 May 1947, reprinted in M. Dockrill, *British Defence Policy Since 1945*, pp.132-138.
31. Admiral Sir Michael Denny, "The Atlantic in a World War: What Does it Mean?" *The Journal of the Royal United Services Institution* (August 1956), p.353.
32. Crowe, "The Policy Roots of the Royal Navy," p.136.
33. The two fleet carriers available at the time were HMS *Eagle*, which had joined the fleet in October 1951, and the older HMS *Indomitable*. HMS *Ark Royal* followed some three and a half years later. Fleet Carriers were functionally equivalent to US attack Carriers (CVA), although they clearly did not match the *Forrestal Class* of carriers which began entering service after 1955. B.B.

Schofield, *British Sea Power: Naval Policy in the Twentieth Century* (London: B.T. Batsford Ltd. 1967), p.221.

34. Crowe, "The Policy Roots of the Royal Navy," p.133. This mission, according to Crowe, was "given number one priority among SACLANT's responsibilities."

35. Norman Friedman, *The Postwar Naval Revolution* (London: Conway Maritime Press), p.41.

36. Eric J. Grove, *Battle for the Fjords: NATO's Forward Maritime Strategy In Action* (London: Ian Allan Ltd., 1991), p.10.

37. "The Defence of the Free World," Text of Address by Lt.General Alfred M. Gruenther, SHAPE Chief of Staff to the American Club of Paris, 28 June 1951, Gruenther, Alfred M. (1), Aug.1950-April 1952, Box 48, D.D.Eisenhower Papers, Pre-Presidential 1916-1952, Eisenhower Library.

38. Opposition from the non-naval members of the British COS, and the unavailability of carriers in sufficient numbers from 1953 onwards doomed the flank concept as envisaged by SACEUR in 1951. For more detailed discussion see, Rolf Tamnes, *The United States and the Cold War in the High North* (Oslo: Ad Notam, 1991), pp.68-69.

39. Grove, *Vanguard to Trident*, pp.91-2.

40. Ibid., p.92.

41. R.D.P./M(53)8, Radical Review, "Minutes of Meeting held 10th November 1953," 11 November 1953, PRO, ADM 1/24695.

42. Ibid.

43. Ibid. As we shall see, Sandys expressed willingness to rely on the US fleet in areas where British naval power had previously dominated is evident in 1957 in connection with the internal discussions about the Defence White Paper.

44. Memorandum by the First Lord of the Admiralty, "The Role of Aircraft Carriers," 9th November, PRO, ADM 1/24695.

45. Annex to R.D.P./P(53)32 "Admiralty replies to questions 1 to 11", 9th December 1953, PRO, ADM 205/93,.

46. R.D.P./P(53)32, Memorandum by First Lord in Reply to R.D.P./P(53)30(R), 9 December 1953, PRO, ADM 205/93.

47. Attachment to Memorandum by the First Lord of the Admiralty, "The Role of Aircraft Carriers," 9 November, PRO, ADM 1/24695.
48. "Enclosure to First Sea Lord's No.2829 of 22nd of December, 1953," PRO, ADM 205/93.
49. Ibid.
50. Grove, *Battle for the Fjords*, p.10.
51. Long Term Plans for the Navy, Enclosure, 28 January 1954, PRO, ADM 205/102.
52. In the spring of 1955, the Office of Naval Intelligence (US), estimated that 660 aircraft were assigned to the 4th Fleet Air Force, 500 to the 8th Fleet Air Force and 498 to the Northern Fleet Air Force, "Developments and trends in the Soviet Fleet and Soviet Naval Air Force during 1954," *The ONI Review Secret Supplement: Spring 1955*, NHC. The *Scimitar* was also to be given a ground support and interdiction capability.
53. First Lord to Minister of Defence, 23rd December, enclosing "The Need for the D.H.110 and the N.113", PRO, ADM 205/93.
54. See, "Capabilities of the Soviet Type 39 Against Allied Naval Operations," *The Oni Review*, vol.9, no.12, December 1954, NHC.
55. The case for the NA39, see, PRO, ADM 205/94.
56. The Navy case for the "aircraft-carrier striking force" in 1955 is clearly spelt out in an article by Rear-Admiral A.D. Torlesse, "The Role of the Aircraft Carrier," *Brassey's Annual 1955: The Armed Forces Year-Book* (London: William Clowes & Sons, Ltd. 1956).
57. D.(55) 1 Meeting, Memorandum by the Minister of Defence, Defence Policy: Heavy Aircraft Carriers, 7 January 1955, PRO, CAB 131/15.
58. D.(55) 1st Meeting, Minutes of Meeting 13 January, 1955, Minute no. 6.- Defence Policy: Heavy Aircraft Carriers, PRO, CAB 131/15.
59. "The Royal Navy in the Atomic Age," Chapter XV, *Brassey's Annual 1955*, p.155.
60. VCNS to First Lord, No.631, 18 December 1953, PRO, ADM 205/93.

61. Brief of SACLANT Mining Plan 1-55, ND, Folder A16-12, Box 320, OP-30, Strategic Plans Division, NHC. This document, obtained from the Operational Archives Branch of the USN, is of particular interest since it is one of the few declassified documents actually to specify wartime plans.
62. Memorandum from Commander in Chief US Naval Forces Eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean to CNO, Subject: Priority List for Advanced Base Development, 14 December 1954, OP-30, Strategic Plans Division, Folder A4, Box 313, NHC.
63. Brief of SACLANT Mining Plan 1-55, ND, Folder A16-12, Box 320, OP-30, Strategic Plans Division, NHC.
64. Ibid.
65. Ibid.
66. Letter From Vice-Admiral R.F. Elkins, B.J.S.M., to First Sea Lord, 31 September 1956, PRO, ADM 205/110, and Letter From Vice-Admiral R.F. Elkins to First Sea Lord, 16 October 1956, PRO, ADM 205/110.
67. Brief of SACLANT Mining Plan 1-55, ND, Folder A16-12, Box 320, OP-30, NHC.
68. Memorandum by the First Lord of the Admiralty, The Role of Aircraft Carriers, 9 November 1953, PRO, ADM 1/24695.
69. Interview with Vice-Admiral Sir Ronald Brockman, 18 March 1991, London.
70. Quoted in Navias, *Nuclear Weapons and British Strategic Planning*, p. 70.
71. Statement on Defence, Cmd. Paper No. 9075 (London: HMSO, 1954). It was in the 1955 White Paper that the decision to build the H-bomb was officially announced.
72. Navias, *Nuclear Weapons and British Strategic Planning*, p.161.
73. Geoffrey Till, "Naval Power," in *Warfare in the Twentieth Century: Theory and Practise*, ed. C. McInnes and G.D. Sheffield (London: Unwin Hyman, 1988), p.97, and "Convoys to North Russia, 1942," Tuesday 17 October 1950, *Supplement to The London Gazette of Friday, 13th October 1950*, p.5140.

74. On the dangers of Soviet submarine operations from the Norwegian coast, see, Remarks by First Sea Lord at CPX 7, 17 April, 1957, MB1/1311 (folder 2), Mountbatten Papers, Archives and Manuscripts Collection, Southampton University Library.

75. Ibid.

76. SACLANT's Emergency Defence Plan 1-55, Report by the Joint Planning Staff, 8 March 1955, PRO, DEFE 4/75.

77. Grove, *Vanguard to Trident*, p.144; CC(54)73rd, Conclusions, PRO, CAB 128/27.

78. D/COS O&T, AFNORTH Historical Reports, 1 Jan. 1954 - 30. June 1954, SECCOS, HQ AFNORTH.

79. "Intelligence Briefs," *The ONI Review*, vol.9, no.9, September 1954, NHC, and, Historical Report, HQ Northern European Command, 1 July 1954 - 30 June 1955, SECCOS, HQ AFNORTH.

80. Interview Vice-Admiral Ronald Brockman, 18 March 1991, London.

81. S.W. Roskill, *The War at Sea 1939 - 1945, Volume I: The Defensive* (London: HMSO, 1954), pp.169-178.

82. "Convoys to North Russia, 1942," Tuesday 17 October 1950, *Supplement to The London Gazette of Friday, 13th October 1950*, p.5141.

83. Philip Ziegler, *Mountbatten* (London: Fontana/Collins, 1986), p.167, and, Roskill, *The War at Sea, Volume I*, pp. 513-514.

84. S.W. Roskill, *The War at Sea III, Part II: The Offensive*, (London: HMSO, 1961), pp.262-263. This attack is particularly interesting in view of the Strike Fleet concept discussed earlier.

85. Many officers that had served with the Home Fleet in Norwegian and Arctic waters during the Second World War came into senior positions in the Admiralty staff after the war. Best known, of course, were Admiral Sir Bruce Fraser (Lord Fraser of North Cape) who served as First Sea Lord from 1948 to 1951, and his successor in this position, Admiral Sir Rhoderick McGrigor, First Sea Lord from 1951 to 1955.

86. Interview with the Earl of Selkirk, 24 January 1991, London.

87. This had been learned the hard way through such disasters as the German attack on PQ 17 in July 1942. "Convoys to North Russia, 1942", Tuesday 17 October 1950, *Supplement to The London Gazette of Friday, 13th October 1950*.
88. Captain H.H. McWilliam, "Sea Power and Aircraft," *Brassey's Annual (The Armed Forces Year-book) 1953* (London: William Clowes & Son. Ltd. 1954).
89. *Ibid.* p. 130.
90. Roskill, *The War at Sea: Volume I*, p.199.
91. NATO Strategy and Level of Forces, Report by the Joint Planning Staff, 27 June 1956, PRO, DEFE 4/88.
92. *Ibid.*
93. COS (56) 63rd Meeting, 29th June 1956, PRO, DEFE 4/88.
94. *Ibid.*
95. JP(57)60(Final), 14 May 1957, Proposals for Change in NATO Military Organisation, Report by the Joint Planning Staff, PRO, DEFE 6/14, and Annex 'A' to COS(57)102, Copy of letter from Sir Frank Roberts to Richard Powell, 24 April 1957, PRO, DEFE 5/75.
96. JP(57)60(Final), 14 May 1957, Proposals for Change in NATO Military Organisation, Report by the Joint Planning Staff, PRO, DEFE 6/14. Montgomery added that CINCNORTH would "only have to look north and out to sea."
97. Interview with Field Marshal Lord Carver, 16 October 1991.
98. Annex 'A' to C.O.S.(57)102, Copy of letter from Sir Frank Roberts to Richard Powell, 24th April 1957, PRO, DEFE 5/75.
99. As Montgomery's biographer put it: "Monty's military gaze had always been unsparingly direct..", Nigel Hamilton, *Monty - The Field Marshal 1944-76* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1986), p.802.
100. Grove, *Vanguard to Trident*, pp.96-97.
101. Sir Anthony Buzzard to General Gruenther (SHAPE), 27 April 1955, Buzzard Adm., Box 24, General Correspondence Series, A. Gruenther Papers, Eisenhower Library. Admiral Buzzard introduced himself to Gruenther as the "red-haired British Director of Naval Intelligence ... with whom you so patiently discussed such topics as Russian submarines and Russian/Scandinavian strategy."

102. "The Political and Strategic Aspects of Atomic Energy," by Sir Anthony Buzzard, 27 April 1955, Buzzard Adm., Box 24, General Correspondence Series, A. Gruenther Papers, Eisenhower Library.
103. Brief for Prime Minister's talks with Norwegian Prime Minister, October 27, 1956, PRO, PREM 11/2437.
104. CNO, Admiral Arleigh Burke to First Sea Lord, Lord Mountbatten, 4 February 1958, PRO, ADM 205/173.
105. *Defence, Outline of Future Policy*, Cmnd. 124, HMSO, April 1957, p.1.
106. Ibid.
107. Wyn Rees, "The 1957 Sandys Defence White Paper: New Priorities in British Defence Policy ?", *The Journal of Strategic Studies* 12 (June 1989), p.226, and Navias, *Nuclear Planning and British Strategic Policy*, pp.185-86.
108. Navias, *Nuclear Weapons and British Strategic Planning*, p.3, and Rees, "The 1957 Defence White Paper," p.217.
109. David Greenwood, "Defence and National Priorities since 1945," in *British Defence Policy in a Changing World*, ed. J. Baylis (London: Croom Helm, 1977), pp.186-188 and 195. For the "underlying tension between British doctrine and British practise" since 1952, see also, R.N. Rosecrane, *Defence of the Realm: British Strategy in the Nuclear Epoch* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1968), pp.178-180.
110. Navias, *Nuclear Strategy and British Strategic Planning*, p.5.
111. Rees, "The 1957 Sandys Defence White Paper," pp.220-224.
112. JP(57)59 (final), plus Annex, SACLANT's Provisional Guidance for Earmarked United Kingdom Forces, 8th May 1957, PRO, DEFE 6/41.
113. Grove, *Vanguard to Trident*, p.199, and, Crowe, "The Policy Roots of the Royal Navy," pp.183-184.
114. J.P.(57)20(Final), The Fleet Air Arm, 18 February 1957, PRO, DEFE 6/40.
115. Rees, "The 1957 Sandys Defence White Paper," pp.226-27. Sir Richard Powell, letter to author, 14 November 1991.

116. Interview with the Earl of Selkirk, 24 January 1991, and Grove, *Vanguard to Trident*, p.202.

117. Defence, Outline of Future Policy (5th Proof), March 1957, PRO, ADM 205/114, and, Defence, Outline of Future Policy, April 1957, Cmnd. 124 (London: HMSO, 1957). In September 1957, in response to pressure for more cuts, the Naval Staff produced a paper referred to as "The Autumn Naval Rethink". The paper, which Sandys endorsed, reiterated the importance of the limited war role and the carrier contribution to it.

118. Philip Ziegler, *Mountbatten* (London: Fontana Paperbacks, 1986), p.553.

119. Defence White Paper 1958, 1st Draft, 1 January 1958, PRO, DEFE 7/986.

120. Ibid.

121. Crowe, "The Policy Roots of the Royal Navy," pp.195-97 and 212-215.

122. Memorandum of Conversation, January 30, 1957, Memos of Conv. S(1), Box 1, General Correspondence and Memoranda Series, J.F. Dulles papers 1951-59, Eisenhower Library.

123. Ibid.

124. Confidential Annex to COS(57) 30th Meeting, 12 April 1957, "Meeting with Admiral Denny," PRO, DEFE 4/96.

125. James Grant, "New U.S. Naval Task Force Seen as Essential for NATO," *The Register*, 5 April 1958.

126. Appendix 'C' to Annex to JP(58)149(Final), Suggested Outline of the United Kingdom Case, JP(58)149(Final), 28 October 1958, Meeting of the COS with Admiral Denny, Report by the Joint Planing Staff, PRO, DEFE 6/52.

127. Annex to C.O.S.(58)158, 17 June 1958, U.K. Reply to 1958 NATO Annual Review, PRO, DEFE 5/84.

128. Allied Naval Forces Northern Europe, Historical Report for 1961, NEC Historical Reports, SECCOS, HQ AFNORTH.

129. Ibid.

130. Letter from Sir Richard Powell, 14 November 1991.

131. Confidential Annex to COS(57) 30th Meeting, "Meeting with Admiral Denny," 12 April 1957, PRO, DEFE 4/96.

132. Sir Richard Powell, letter to author, 14 November 1991. Sir Richard Powell was present at the Bermuda meeting between Macmillan and Eisenhower.

133. Confidential Annex to COS(57) 30th Meeting, "Meeting with Admiral Denny," 12 April 1957, PRO, DEFE 4/96.

134. Ibid.

135. Confidential Annex to COS(57) 30th Meeting, 12 April, 1957, "Meeting with Admiral Denny", PRO, DEFE 4/96.

136. Without such details, Admiral Wright argued, he would have "no basis for accurate planning" in the years 1958 and 1959. COS(57) 34th Meeting, 7th May, 1957, Minutes, PRO, DEFE 4/97.

137. COS(57) 34th Meeting, 7th May, 1957, Minutes, PRO, DEFE 4/97.

138. Ibid.

139. JP(57)59 (final), plus Annex, SACLANT's Provisional Guidance for Earmarked United Kingdom Forces, 8th May 1957, PRO, DEFE 6/41.

140. COS(57) 34th Meeting, 7th May, 1957, Minutes, PRO, DEFE 4/97.

141. JP(57)59 (final), plus Annex, SACLANT's Provisional Guidance for Earmarked United Kingdom Forces, 8th May 1957, PRO, DEFE 6/41.

142. Ibid.

143. COS (57) 35th Meeting, Minutes, 10th May, 1957, PRO, DEFE 4/97.

144. James Grant, "New U.S. Naval Task Force Seen as Essential for NATO," *The Register (Army-Navy-Air Force Register)*, 5 April 1958.

145. NATO Press Release, SACLANT Command Information Bureau Atlantic, "EXERCISE STRIKE BACK", 27 September 1957 - No.13.

146. Hanson W. Baldwin, "Weak Point in Fleet - An Analysis of Naval Communications and Other Facts Learned in Manoeuvres," *New York Times*, 2 October 1957.

147. To practise this scenario RAF Bomber Command simulated nuclear attacks on the Strike Fleet during STRIKE BACK. NATO Press Release, SACLANT Command Information Bureau Atlantic, "EXERCISE STRIKE BACK", 27 September 1957 - No.13.
148. HQ Allied Air Forces Northern Europe. Historical Report, 1 Jan. 1958 - 31 Dec.1958, SECCOS, HQ AFNORTH.
149. "NATO Naval Force Weakness Bared in Exercises", *The Register*, October 19, 1957.
150. Ibid.
151. Performance of U.S.S. Nautilus, Extract from Report of 30th October by C.in C. Home Fleet, PRO, ADM 205/178.
152. Ibid. None of these results was publicized in the official press releases which only referred to the performance of conventional submarines.
153. NATO Press Release, SACLANT Command Information Bureau Atlantic, Joint Statement by Admiral Sir John Eccles (RN) and Air Marshal Sir Bryan Reynolds (RAF), 27th September, 1957 - No.15.
154. "'Grave Risk' in Naval Defence," *Times* (London), 28 September 1957.
155. Ibid.
156. "New U.S. Naval Task Force Seen as Essential for NATO," *The Register*, 5 April 1958.
157. "The Major N.A.T.O. Naval Exercises in 1957," in *Brassey's Annual 1958* (London: William & Clowes, 1958), pp. 69-70.
158. Vice-Admiral B.B. Schofield, "Maritime Affairs," *Army Quarterly* (January 1958), and, "Navies 'Not In Good Shape' - NATO Commanders Complaint," *Manchester Guardian*, 22 November 1957.
159. "NATO Naval Force Weakness Bared in Exercises," *The Register*, 19 October 1957. It should be noted, that concern about the weakening of British defence efforts was not confined exclusively to the US Navy, but was in fact shared by the President himself. Referring to the period between May and September 1958, Steven Ambrose records that the President "...was greatly concerned by the British military position, which the J.C.S. told him was woefully weak." Stephen E. Ambrose *Eisenhower: The President, Volume II* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1984), p.478.

160. Wyn Rees, "Brothers in Arms: Anglo-American defence co-operation in 1957," in *Post-war Britain, 1945-64: Themes and Perspectives*, ed. A. Gorst, L. Johnman and W.S. Lucas (London: Pinter Publishers, 1989), p.213.
161. Ziegler, *Mountbatten*, p.554.
162. CNO, Arleigh Burke to First Sea Lord, Lord Mountbatten, 23 February, 1958, PRO, ADM 205/173.
163. "US of British Carriers - U.S. Surprised", *Manchester Guardian*, May 12 1958.
164. Ibid.
165. Admiral Burke to Lord Mountbatten, 4 February 1958, PRO, ADM 205/173.
166. Ibid.
167. Letter from DDE to The Hon. Sam Rayburn, May 13 1958, OF 208, Box 883, Dwight D. Eisenhower: Records as President, White House Central Files, OF205(2), Eisenhower Library.