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Performing Nuclear Peace: How nuclear weapons have kept Britain Great from Thatcher to Blair

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Declaration

I, Paul Beaumont, declare that this thesis is a result of my research investigations and findings. Sources of information other than my own have been acknowledged and a reference list has been appended. This work has not been previously submitted to any other university for award of any type of academic degree.

Signature:

Date:

Abstract

The question of *why* states maintain nuclear weapons typically receives short shrift: it's security, *silly*. The international is a perilous place, and nuclear weapons represent the ultimate self-help device. Other 'factors' like status and domestic interests provide the background music. This thesis seeks to unsettle this complacency by drawing on Foucault to reconceptualise nuclear weapon-armed states as *nuclear regimes of truth*, refocusing on the processes through which governments produce and *maintain* country-specific discourses that enable their continued possession of nuclear weapons. Building on Derrida's observation that nuclear weapons are a "fabulously textual" phenomenon, this thesis argues that because nuclear weapons are represented to work by not being used (deterrence) their utility depends on hypotheticals, and therefore remains *transcendental.* Consequently, maintaining a nuclear regime of truth requires considerable discursive imagination and labour to constitute the benefits of possessing nuclear weapons—whether that be status, security or both at the same time. To investigate these nuclear regimes of truth, this thesis critiques and modifies Lene Hansen's *Foreign Policy/Identity Nexus*: developing a more flexible Weberian conception of legitimacy, theorizing how Hansen's *degrees of otherness* can illuminate *status seeking*, borrowing from *nukespeak* and Lakoff to theorize policy representations, and adding desirability to the goal of policy makers. Using the UK nuclear weapons policy between 1980 and 2010 as an exploratory case study, this thesis provides practical insights beyond the grasp of conventional approaches to nuclear weapons research. From how Thatcher's reification of the *nuclear peace correlation* contributes to a 21st disarmament-taboo in UK politics, to how the end of the Cold War saw the UK replace its *Security* legitimacy with a new Non-Proliferation Treaty-based *Prefect* legitimacy that divests ethical responsibility for the world's nuclear weapons problem through the performance of a *counting bombs narrative,* this thesis historicizes and deconstructs the many moving parts of the UK's 21st century nuclear common sense. Ultimately, this thesis provides the theoretical legwork for future empirical investigations into other nuclear regimes of truth.

Contents

Abbreviations

BBC – British Broadcasting Corporation

CASD - Continuous at sea deterrence

CND – Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament

EU – The European Union

ICAN – The International Campaign for Abolishment of Nuclear Weapons

IAEA – The International Atomic Energy Agency

ILPI – The International Law and Policy Institute (Norway)

IR – International Relations (the discipline)

MoD – The Ministry of Defence (UK)

MP – Member of Parliament (UK)

NAM – The Non-Aligned Movement

NATO – North Atlantic Alliance Organisation

NWFW – Nuclear Weapons Free World

NPT – Non-Proliferation Treaty

NWS – Nuclear Weapons State

NNWS – Non Nuclear Weapons State

RUSI – The Royal United Service Institute

SDP – Social Democratic Party (UK)

SSBN – Ships Submersible Ballistic Nuclear (Ballistic missile equipped submarines)

TASM – Tactical air surface missiles

UN – United Nations

Preface

I am going to do what I can to show you how I have arrived at this opinion about the room and the money. I am going to develop in your presence as fully and freely as I can the train of thought which led me to think this. Perhaps if I lay bare the ideas, the prejudices that lay behind this statement you will find that they have some bearing upon women and some upon fiction.

Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One's Own,* 1928

Laying your cards face up on the table at the beginning is a terrible strategy for winning at poker, but should be mandatory for social scientists. From a constructivist perspective, humans are formed by, and contribute to the construction of the social world. As a consequence Doty (2004, p. 390) argues critical scholars should "undertake a continual interrogation of [their] own identities" and "any body of thought, perspective, approach, or critical attitude that uses the rhetoric of social construction and takes this notion seriously must include oneself in the equation or admit to a deceit."[1] However, this is no easy task; Neumann's dream of a "magic self-reflecting quill" (2008a, p. 78) that could account for an author's subjectivity has yet to be realised. Indeed, the implications of this– and I use the first person very deliberately - cannot be avoided by what Barthes (1967) called "zero degree writing": writing that generates authority though the illusion of objectivity, neutrality and ultimately separation between the researcher and the object and world under investigation (Doty, 2004)

Drawing on these insights, this thesis occasionally uses the first person to remind the reader I am engaged in an interpretive exercise: telling a story, producing my own discourse(Gusterson, 2008). Indeed, I hope my representation will be enlightening, convincing, and fascinating, but I do not make any pretence of it being a definitive truth (lest I be shipwrecked by the laughter of the gods). Moreover, following Doty's advice, I will now disclose the elements of my identity that *will* have compromised my objectivity; I leave it to the reader to judge how much.

My Identity Bias

I selected the British nuclear weapons policy as the object for my analysis late. I had initially sleepwalked into writing about George W. Bush's "War on Terror", but it soon began to dawn on me that I clearly lacked what Neumann (2008; 63-64) calls the "cultural competence" on the

[1] I would go further: *All* scholars should interrogate their own identities and their decisions, regardless of their methodological position.

issue. These anxieties were fermenting when I had the good fortune to get an internship at the International Law and Policy Institute (ILPI), working on their Nuclear Weapons Project. While I had no special *a prior* interest in nuclear weapons, nor strong belief regarding the dangers they posed to the world, I contributed to their on-going efforts "to shape and inform the debate on how to eliminate nuclear weapons, by way of analysis, networking and outreach" (ILPI, N.D) In the process, I came to believe that British nuclear weapons policy is both pregnant with relevance to the current international nuclear situation, and dense with logical contradictions, contested representations that made it an ideal object of analysis for a master's thesis. One that, critically, I have more than the adequate cultural competence to study.

However, while being British born and raised is an advantage in terms of cultural competence, it comes with a cost in prejudice towards the subject; I am cynical about British politics and specifically towards Tony Blair and New Labour.[2] While discourse analysis is not a tool for one identifying secret motivations, my bias may have led me to be particularly sensitive to logical inconsistencies in the UK government's nuclear discourse. Second, I should disclose that on behalf of ILPI I wrote several pieces critical of the nuclear status quo, and worked with a group sharing the same purpose (Beaumont, 2014; Beaumont & Rubinsky, 2012). Therefore, I have probably been somewhat conditioned by anti-nuclear arguments: I believe that maintaining nuclear weapons is a poor policy for the UK.[3] This probably explains why this thesis seeks to make an "interpretative intervention" in the UK pro-nuclear discourse rather than in the oppositional discourse.

Biases are inevitable and unavoidable; the best a researcher can do is do his best to recognise and attempt to mitigate them to the best of their abilities. And of course, lay their cards face up on the table at the beginning.

[2] While I have prejudices, because I have spent the majority of my adult life living abroad (Prague, Krakow, Tokyo, Buenos Aires, and Oslo) I believe have kept sufficient distance to avoid becoming what Neumann (2008, p. 65) calls becoming "home blind" to the puzzles of British politics.

[3] In short, Robert McNamara's quasi-syllogism sums up my position: "(1) nuclear weapons make nuclear war possible, (2) major nuclear war has the unique capacity to destroy our present civilization and jeopardize the survival of the human race; (3)Human fallibility means that a nuclear exchange is ultimately inevitable"

Chapter 1

Problematizing the Maintenance of Nuclear Weapons

Atomic escapism must be avoided. One form of escapism is to believe that nuclear weapons will go away. They will not. Because they will not, mankind must learn to live with them if we are to live at all.

- The Harvard Nuclear Study Group, *Living with Nuclear Weapons*, 1983

We must conceive discourse as a violence that we do to things, or, at all events, as a practice we impose upon them; it is in this practice that the events of discourse find the principle of their regularity.

- Michel Foucault, *Discourse on Language,* 1972

This thesis investigates *how* it is possible that a state maintains nuclear weapons.[4] This is unusual. The conventional nuclear research agenda does not consider the maintenance of nuclear weapons much of a puzzle. In short, many in the security community consider nuclear weapons so obviously useful for a state engaged in self-help, that no right-minded state would willingly give them up (Chapter 4). Nuclear weapon possession has prompted a great deal of investigation into how best to *manage* nuclear weapons, but very little on how states maintain them. Indeed, Security Studies, informed by realism, was traditionally concerned with improving nuclear weapons management strategies: deterrence and arms control theorizing, and addressing the practical problems changing nuclear technology posed to the Cold War nuclear balance (Buzan & Hansen, 2009; Freedman, 2004; Williams & Krause, 1996). After the Cold War the discipline, efforts at "widening" notwithstanding, switched its nuclear focus from deterrence to anti-proliferation (Krause & Latham, 1998). Meanwhile, maintenance of nuclear weapons by great powers remained largely ignored. Instead realists, informed by their

[4] I will explain below, but Doty (1993, p. 298) provides in my view the most lucid account of what "how-possible" questions entail: "In posing such a question, I examine how meanings are produced and attached to various social subjects/objects, thus constituting particular interpretive dispositions which create certain possibilities and preclude others. What is explained is not why a particular outcome obtained, but rather how the subjects, objects, and interpretive dispositions were socially constructed such that certain practices were made possible"

assumptions, focus on variations of the puzzle: "Why do non-nuclear weapons states exist?"[5] (Hymans, 2006) While those few that do pose the opposite "why" question, tend to debate the objective "factors" that cause said states to want the bomb: whether they be security (the dominant answer), prestige, or domestic interests (Sagan, 1996). One might assume disarmament research would be promising; after all, if a state ceases to maintain its nuclear weapons it has *de-facto* disarmed. However, as Levite (2009) bemoans, disarmament remains much understudied not least because of the absence of data to work with. Moreover, the little disarmament research undertaken typically only seeks to explain the few states that have already given up or reversed their nuclear weapons programmes. Again, this angle precludes puzzling over how countries *maintain* their nuclear weapons.[6]

Nonetheless, strip away realist *doxa* regarding the desirability of nuclear weapons and an international puzzle emerges. Only nine nuclear weapon-armed states exist, 183[7] live without nuclear weapons, and most seem quite content with their non-nuclear status.[8] Moreover, almost 50 countries have the technical capability to build nuclear weapons yet only nine have chosen do so (see Appendix 2.). Considering that non-nuclear security is the norm, and maintaining nuclear weapons relatively odd, the realist puzzle becomes a function of their theoretical commitments rather than empirics (Hymans, 2006). Instead of asking why non-nuclear weapons states have *not* acquired the bomb, it would make more sense to consider the few states that maintain such unpopular, yet expensive weapons to be the puzzle

This thesis challenges the taken for grantedness of states' maintenance of nuclear weapons. While various answers to *why* states acquired and possess nuclear weapons have been posited, these explanations typically ignore how the social and material objects constituting these reasons were constructed, maintained, remodelled, reified and sometimes discarded. This thesis does not dispute any one of these explanations *per se*, but rather argues that governments have considerable power in *producing* the security, status, and domestic political meaning that enable the maintenance of nuclear weapons within their state's society. Indeed, because nuclear weapons are represented to "work" by not being used, I argue their deterrence utility is *transcendental* – what nuclear weapons have (or have not) deterred is impossible to prove

[5] Or, put more precisely, why have the 45 or so non-nuclear states that possess the necessary technology refrained from weaponizing.
[6] For a review of the current state of the conventional nuclear research agenda see Sagan (2011).
[7] There are 188 signators to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), 183 of them have signed as Non-Nuclear Weapons States (NNWS). Currently four countries are not signatories: Pakistan, India, Israel, and North Korea (which withdrew in 2003). India, Pakistan and North Korea have openly tested nuclear weapons, while Israel's nuclear weapons programme is an open secret.
[8] Most seem content with not having nuclear weapons, not necessarily content with the Nuclear weapons states (NWS) continued possession of nuclear weapons.

(Chapter 4). This transcendental quality of nuclear weapons discourse grants states a peculiar flexibility in representing the weapons' benefits; however, it also has a flip-side. In the absence of proven "effects" the positive meanings attached to nuclear weapons also require considerable discursive labour, imagination, and adaptation to remain salient, avoid decay and thus enable maintenance. To illustrate this contention, this thesis conducts an "exploratory case study" of the UK's nuclear foreign policy (Eckstein, 2000, pp. 140–141). Conducting a post-structuralist discourse analysis, I historicize and deconstruct several of the UK discourse's nuclear "truths" that enabled maintenance around two key periods: 1980-87 and 2005-2009. For example, the analysis illuminates how Thatcher's foreign policy performances of the Soviet's aggressive identity solidified the transcendental utility the UK's nuclear weapons were represented to have had in providing "nuclear peace" for the UK during the Cold War. This now enables nuclear weapons to be represented as a solution to future "uncertainty" in the UK's 21st century nuclear discourse. Meanwhile, the analysis also reveals that the UK's nuclear discourse's constitution of legitimacy and status has changed since the end of the Cold War from representations stressing the security necessity of its nuclear weapons to Europe, to representations of legitimacy and status generated through the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and the UK's disarmament policies. However, the UK's nuclear weapons maintenance resists simple answers and as chapters 4, 5 and 6 demonstrate, these two "explanations" are imbricated with, and dependent upon several others. Indeed, the following analysis seeks to dispel the idea that the UK nuclear weapons maintenance can be attributed to a single independent cause, that nuclear maintenance can be considered natural or inevitable, and ultimately demonstrate that nuclear weapons maintenance warrants problematizing in other countries beyond the UK.

I should clarify what I mean by *maintain*. By investigating the maintenance of nuclear weapons, I do not mean documenting meticulously the materials required to keep the nuclear weapons system going or the "objective" threats that justified it, nor endeavouring to reach inside the minds of policy makers and uncover why they made consecutive decisions to acquire, maintain and renew British nuclear weapons. In contrast, this thesis investigates the UK's role in constructing the social world within which it is embedded: how UK governments (re)produce a foreign policy discourse that constitutes its nuclear weapons as legitimate and desirable. Rather than seeking to reveal how one particular representation is right, wrong, or closer to an objective reality, it analyses how UK foreign policy helps to (re)produce the "reality", makes it possible for the UK to maintain their nuclear weapons. As I elaborate below, this conception of *maintenance* - analysed through a modified version of Hansen's Foreign Policy/Identity Nexus -

opens up both a fruitful new path of research into UK nuclear weapons (Chapter 3) as well as offering a new angle for post-positivist nuclear weapons research more generally.[9]

Before I present the specific research question, it is necessary to first outline both the ontological commitments that make my problematique possible,[10] the theoretical framework that provides the analytical rigour, as well as the context of the British case. With the theoretical and empirical underpinnings in place, I will then present my specific research question and outline the puzzles this thesis addresses. This chapter concludes by outlining this thesis' three broad objectives before providing an outline of the chapters that will take us there.

Theoretical Foundations

This problematization of *maintenance* is grounded in (my reading of) post-structuralist conceptions of discourse and Foucault's *Regimes of Truth*. Rather than conceiving language as reflective of reality, this thesis holds that language is a *productive* meaning producing force. No physical or social object has an *a-priori* social meaning that transcends social construction and therefore every "truth" contained in language must be considered subjective. These subjectivities are not innocent but the function of productive political power: the power to produce, circulate, distribute, and regulate statements about the social world that form more or less coherent frameworks – *discourses* – for making the world intelligible. These discourses have political consequences; they constrain what we think of, and therefore what we can do (Neumann, 2008, p.62). As *regime* suggests, truths require maintenance: discursive labour to keep functioning. Here we can begin to see how this conception of a social world enables this thesis' problematique. Rather than treating the international as external reality whose truths we can reveal with careful objective study, this thesis investigates the UK government's complicity in producing, maintaining and modifying a *regime of truth* surrounding its nuclear weapons that makes make their possession plausible.

While my reading of Foucault and post-structuralists' discursive ontology underpins this thesis' problematique, it builds upon Lene Hansen's *Foreign Policy/Identity Nexus* to structure the analysis. In brief, Hansen advises analysing how governments seek to present a foreign policy

[9] Nuclear weapons have long been a target of critical scholars, though not in the manner I am proposing. I will review the key post-positivist nuclear research that relates but does not pre-emt this analysis in Chapter 3. Chapter 2 will refashion some of the concepts from *nukepeak* – one branch of the Nuclear Criticism, which flourished in 1980s before dwindling in the 90s. (Taylor, 1998)

[10] As Jackson (2011, p.41) suggests, "ontological foundations are foundational not in the sense that they provide unshakable grounds that universally guarantee the validity of claims that are founded on them, but foundational in the sense that they provide the conditions of intelligibility for those claims." I would go further: that my ontological commitments provide the conditions of intelligibility of my puzzle, hence why I have will explain it briefly here before I present my research question.

that is legitimate and enforceable through investigating the changing discursive constructions of the Self and Other collective identities and the policy that links them (elaborated in Chapter 2). However, this thesis does not merely use the nexus, but develops it: addressing three weak spots in Hansen's theory as it currently stands. First, while Hansen mentions that rival discourses can challenge the logic that underpins the policy, her theorization of legitimacy focuses on "security". This emphasis on security logic risks hiding the various logics of legitimacy available to foreign policy practitioners, particularly on non-urgent policy issues. To address this problem, I propose a flexible *Weberian* definition of legitimacy that enables analysis of the multifaceted nature of the logics of legitimacy constructed in foreign policy discourses. Second, Hansen's foreign policy identity nexus, like a lot of post-positivist work, privileges identity construction over policy representations in the discourse.[11] While Hansen's Foreign Policy/Identity nexus can accommodate more emphasis on policy representations, she under-theorizes it at the expense of collective identity construction in *Security as Practice.* Chapter 2 addresses this weakness by incorporating *nukespeak* into the nexus; Chapters 5 and 6 will thus seek to illustrate how paying closer attention to the interplay between representations of policy and identity in British nuclear weapons discourse can pay dividends.[12] Third, Hansen's narrow assumption that foreign policy makers seek merely legitimate and enforceable foreign policies misses how long term policies maintain their legitimacy through presenting their policies as having positive outcomes. Chapter 2 will also theorize why adding desirability to the objectives of foreign policy makers can provide greater analytic depth to the nexus, and allow it to more rigorously investigate non-urgent long-term foreign policies, such as nuclear weapons maintenance. Finally, building on this incorporation of desirability, Chapter 2 theorizes how Hansen's conception of *degrees of Otherness* can be utilized to capture *status seeking* in the international and thus also help show how states seek positive outcomes.

The UK Case: Maintaining and Renewing Trident

The UK constitutes a rich case for problematizing the maintenance of nuclear weapons. Since 1952, Britain has spent tens of billions of pounds building, maintaining, upgrading, and

[11] In many of these investigations foregrounding identity proves insightful because the foreign policy under investigation (often military interventions, or crises of some kind) is relatively short-lived – unlike the discursive economy mobilised to legitimise particular policies (See Chapter 2). Nonetheless, the deficit left by privileging identity construction has been noted elsewhere and has begun to be addressed. Most notably, "practice turn in IR" addresses what Pouliot (2010, p. 14) argues is a "representational bias" in IR scholarship that ignores the inarticulate practical knowledge that informs much of the practices going on in the international (Adler & Pouliot, 2011). Meanwhile, Leira argues concern with identity formation (among other foreign policy puzzles) hides how foreign policy emerged as "problem to be handled" in the first place. This thesis, addressing a similar problem from a different angle, suggests that focus on identity formation has contributed to the representation of policies (and their practices) being left in the background.

[12] As my analysis will show, I still consider identity constructions as key to understanding policy outcomes, just that their interplay with policy representations should be analysed more thoroughly.

modifying its nuclear weapons systems.[13] Parallel to the material manifestations of the bombs themselves, consecutive UK governments have produced millions of words attaching meanings to the UK's nuclear weapons and nuclear weapons policy. From its first nuclear "gravity bombs" to the UK's current nuclear submarine launched inter-continental ballistic missile system, Trident, UK governments have sought to present their nuclear weapons to their domestic public as legitimate and desirable, and thus ultimately as a good and right allocation of resources.[14] This on-going process of attaching meanings to the UK's nuclear weapons will continue as long as those nuclear weapons exist.

However all this does not happen in a vacuum; the UK government does not have a monopoly on imbuing its nuclear weapons with meaning. Rather, the UK government is just one socially powerful actor within the national discourse, and one state amongst many more in the international. To borrow Derrida's (1984) term, nuclear weapons sustain a "fabulously textual" realm in which governments, institutions, politicians, anti-nuclear activists, academics, security professionals, newspapers, and other states provide competing representations of what the UK's nuclear weapons mean, what they do, and what they have done. The fact that nuclear weapons – through deterrence – are said to work by not being used leads to wildly divergent accounts of nuclear reality, leaving behind little to analyse except a fuzzy peace correlation, continuously patrolling nuclear submarines, and words (Chapter 4). For example, David Cameron (2010), the current Prime Minister, considers the UK's nuclear weapons as the UK's "ultimate insurance policy" that has kept the UK safe for 60 years. Meanwhile those same weapons to Michael McGuire (2006) are "irrelevant" and offer little more than a "comfort blanket" that merely make the UK *feel* safe. To make the UK's nuclear weapons possible therefore, maintenance requires a sufficient number, or at least the necessary people, to share an understanding closer to Cameron's rather than McGuire's. Indeed, the contestation over the meaning of British nuclear weapons illuminates Bartelson's (1995, p. 2) assertion that discourse is a "battle over truth".

[13] For example, the current nuclear weapon system, Trident, cost more than 15 billion to acquire, and around 3-4% of the defence budget to run.(Hartley, 2006, pp. 678–679) The total life cycle costs of the current system (Trident) are expected to be 25 billion (at 2005/6 prices). While opponents dispute some of these figures, whether UK nuclear weapons are considered a good use of resources tends to come down to whether one believes in the security benefits accredited to British nuclear weapons: if one believes nuclear weapons keep the UK safe they are cheap, if one believes they are "worse than irrelevant" and dangerous they are a waste of money (see chapters 4, 5 & 6). Hence, this thesis focuses much more on the representations that account for Tridents utility and legitimacy rather than the economic representations.

[14] It is important to note the difference between the decision making and the ultimate presentation of policy. Particularly in the early years nuclear decision making was made in secret without parliamentary approval. The decision made was only later announced and presented to the public. Nonetheless, even though the decision was taken beforehand, the future decisions depended on the acceptance of those earlier decisions.

More than any other nuclear armed state the UK's nuclear weapons programme has been contested in mainstream politics (Quinlan, 2006). Indeed, the UK government's nuclear regime of truth has undergone several periods of sustained contestation: in the 1950s the UK's nuclear weapons laboratory at Aldermaston was the frequent site of mass CND protests; moreover, in 1964, 1983, and 1987 Labour stood for election on the promise of removing all nuclear weapons from UK territory.[15] In 2007 the UK set in motion the process of renewing its nuclear weapons until the 2060s, it sparked a considerable fight in parliament: Labour enforced a three line whip on their party to ensure the bill passed,[16] and even then, they had to rely upon the opposition party support to get the bill passed (Ritchie, 2012). Currently, the UK's domestic public opinion – which hovers around 50% approval for Trident - seems ambivalent to nuclear weapons, even if this is not reflected in the policies of the mainstream parties.[17] Thus, the British case provides an intriguing example how constituting nuclear weapons as a legitimate and desirable foreign policy can prove difficult and thus making its maintenance a particularly interesting object of inquiry.

Nonetheless, in conducting a discourse analysis of the UK's maintenance of nuclear weapons I am eschewing the traditional puzzles of most British nuclear weapons research (reviewed in Chapter 3). Until recently it remained almost untouched by the post-positivist turn in international relations. Typically, analyses of British nuclear weapons policy have focused on the following questions: Why does the UK have nuclear weapons?[18] Should the UK have nuclear weapons (yes or no)?[19] How have decisions to acquire particular nuclear weapons been made?[20] What are the problems and dilemmas associated with the UK's nuclear policy?[21] Most of this research (implicitly) takes language as reflective of reality, and objective truth accessible, and thus explanation and truth claims as their goal. They certainly do not problematize the

[15] Although Labour won the election, they reneged on their promise to disarm the UK's nuclear weapons. Instead of getting rid of the UK's nuclear weapons, they merely decided to cut the number the UK would purchase from the US from five nuclear Polaris submarines to four. (Scott, 2006)
[16] Enforcing a three line whip on a party implies that anyone that votes against the party line will receive severe reprisals, and risk getting thrown out of the party. Indeed, four Labour ministers resigned their posts in the cabinet in order to vote against Trident.
[17] However it should be noted that this level fluctuates wildly depending on the how the question is phrased. Regardless, this indicates that the approval of nuclear weapons maintenance cannot be taken for granted in the manner realists typically assume. See Byrom (2007) for analysis of British public opinion towards nuclear weapons.
[18] See, Croft & Williams 1990, Scott 2006 Ritchie 2010; Stoddart & Baylis, 2012
[19] See Ritchie 2009, Beach, 2009; Beach & Gurr, 1999; Lewis, 2006; MccGwire, 2005, 2006; Ritchie, 2009; Sliwinski, 2009
[20] See Freedman, 1985; Ritchie, 2009; Ritchie & Ingram, 2010; Robb, 2010; Stoddart, 2008; Willett, 2010 Booth & Baylis, 1989
[21] Some notable examples of what is a popular theme: Freedman, 1980; Quinlan, 2006; Ritchie, 2008, 2012; Rogers, 2006; Smith, 2011; Witney, 1994; Dombey, Fischer, & Walker, 1987; Freedman, 1986, 1999; Walker, 2010 Clarke, 2004

discursive maintenance of the UK's nuclear weapons. Some scholars have begun to mobilise, if not the methodology, at least some of the terminology of post-structuralist research (Ritchie, 2010, 2012; Walker, 2010). However, as Chapter 3 explains, they serve to open doors to post-structuralist investigation rather than walking through them themselves.

Research Question & Empirical Puzzles

My analysis zones in on the UK's two most recent big nuclear weapon system acquisition decisions: the purchase and defence of the Trident nuclear weapons system by Margaret Thatcher in 1980, and Tony Blair's decision to begin the process of acquiring a "like for like" replacement of Trident in 2007. Specifically it will analyse two key nuclear periods of foreign policy discourse: Thatcher government's representation of its nuclear policy from 1979-1987, and the Labour government's representation of its nuclear policy between 2005 and 2010.[22] Choosing these two periods has the advantage that it neatly straddles the Cold War and captures how UK governments led differing nuclear discourses adapted to new and very different circumstances. Moreover it offers the methodological bonus that the main part of the nuclear policy that the UK needed to present as legitimate and desirable – the acquisition and then the renewal its Trident armed nuclear submarines – was similar for both periods.[23] The above combination of theory and empirics leads to the research question:

- How have consecutive UK governments represented its purchase, renewal and maintenance of its strategic nuclear weapons system as legitimate, enforceable and desirable between the decision to purchase the first Trident nuclear weapons system in 1980 and the decision to begin renewal in 2007?

Social enquiry should shed light on real world issues. This thesis should easily meet this criterion: it addresses the growing international disarmament agenda as well as the long term nuclear problem the world continues to grapple with. Put simply, if the many pursuing a disarmament agenda can better understand how states maintain support for their nuclear weapons programmes, they can better understand how to undermine them. Ceasing to maintain nuclear weapons after all, is the same as disarmament. Indeed, security scholars are increasingly recognising the need to take investigation into maintenance seriously, for example

[22] I focus on the discourse around these periods because UK's nuclear maintenance to a large extent depends on these cyclical renewal decisions. Except for the continual but usually peripheral whirring of the anti-nuclearist movement, the discursive activity around UK's nuclear weapons lulls in the down-time.

[23] Comparing the rationale for two very different policy decisions would make the strength of any argument that seeks to compare their logic of legitimacy or how those policies were represented, necessarily weaker See Moses and Knutsen (2012) on the pitfalls of comparison in social science.

Ritchie (2010) argues: "[T] here are wider obstacles to relinquishing nuclear weapons that must be examined in order to understand why states retain nuclear weapons and will find it difficult to abandon them, even if the strategic security threats that motivated their original acquisition have diminished or faded altogether." Meanwhile Walker (2010) sensibly suggests that giving up weapons implies "idiosyncratic implications" for each nuclear armed state and therefore analysts should focus on understanding each state's specific relationship to their nuclear weapons in order to better understand how they can be persuaded to give them up. This thesis follows Walker and Ritchie's suggested research agenda. Indeed, this question opens up several puzzles related to British nuclear weapons policy.

The conventional way of problematizing nuclear possession involves looking for various objective proliferation triggers that can explain why these states acquired nuclear weapons: the dominant answer usually given is "security". Once nuclear weapons have been acquired though, few scholars have investigated how these security threats that justify their existence come to be accepted, let alone maintained. While accepting that acquiring working nuclear weapons is generally considered the hard bit of putting together a nuclear weapons programme, states (to varying degrees) still need to justify the continuous costs of their nuclear weapons to their populace.[24] Informed by *Securitization* theory,[25] this thesis investigates how those threats *become* threats; threats that justify nuclear weapons in the UK while prompting little more than a shrug amongst NNWS. However, this thesis also investigates how the UK constitutes other positive meanings for its nuclear weapons, beyond security alone. Indeed, most states certainly do not represent nuclear weapons desirable in the way Britain presents them to be, nor do they seem especially envious of the status many experts assert nuclear weapons affords (for example RUSI, 2006, § 1.2). As Hugh Beech wryly notes, Germany and Japan do not seem "unduly concerned" nuclear blackmail, so why should the UK? (2009, p. 37) Thus, the UK's nuclear maintenance requires constituting new uses and threats for nuclear weapons fit for changing international circumstances. This thesis will analyse how this is achieved: how the UK has maintained the belief that nuclear weapons are desirable when many other countries apparently do fine without them.

Second, this thesis speaks to a temporally specific nuclear legitimacy problem prompted by the end of the Cold War. During the Cold War the UK frequently justified the UK's purchase of nuclear weapons as necessary to defend against the threat from the Soviet Union. When the

[24] Jackson and Krebs (2007) for example suggest that even policies that appear to be supported by consensus require a justifying "frame".
[25] See Buzan et al. (1998) for the seminal early text and (2005) Balzacq for a contemporary research agenda.

Soviet Union disintegrated it left the UK's nuclear weapons without its former *raison d'être*. Given UK seemed to want to keep its nuclear weapons this presented a political problem. Indeed, Nicholas Witney (1994) of the Ministry of Defence wrote at length on how the UK government needed to "refurbish the rationale" for its nuclear weapons in the post-Cold War era and concluded that none of the options available to the UK appeared unproblematic. Thirteen years later with a new nuclear acquisition decision fast approaching, finding a convincing rationale remained elusive, as MccGwire (2006, p. 640) put it succinctly in 2006: "Today the Soviet threat is no more and we are at least 750 miles from the nearest areas of political turbulence. Anchored off Western Europe, with allies and friends on all sides, Britain is unusually secure. Do we still need nuclear weapons?" McGuire's answer was a resounding no, but the government's was a resounding yes. This thesis seeks to understand how the UK found a sufficiently convincing and legitimate nuclear rationale in the post-Cold War era that successfully marginalised alternative oppositional representations, such as McGuire's.[26]

Third, the UK, like many of the nuclear weapons states now vigorously pursues anti-nuclear proliferation policy, while simultaneously maintaining, upgrading and renewing its own nuclear weapons programme. This policy causes much consternation amongst many of the non-nuclear weapons states, particularly those in the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).[27] It has led to accusations that nuclear weapons states such as the UK practice a hypocritical system of "nuclear apartheid".[28] While acknowledging that realism can explain *why* the UK does this, and how it physically can, it does not explain how a government can present this policy as legitimate to its domestic or international audience. This thesis will therefore investigate how the UK discourse reconciles the UK's maintenance and renewal of its nuclear weapons with its strong anti-nuclear proliferation policy, and its claims to be dedicated to a nuclear weapon free world.

Fourth, nuclear weapons analysts frequently debate whether the states pursue nuclear weapons for reasons of prestige or security.[29] The UK is no different in this regard,[30] but frequently the discussion involves speculating about the motivations of decision makers, and/or by ontologies

[26] It is worth noting that MccGwire was certainly not alone, nor his opposition short-lived. A member of the Navy, respected security scholar and Sovietologist he wrote at length throughout the 1980s on what he considered to be the folly of deterrence, see MccGwire (1984, 1985, 1986, 1994, 2001, 2005).
[27] See NPT 2010, when NAM states refused to accept new anti-proliferation Safeguards explicitly because of the lack of progress on disarmament.
[28] This term was coined by Argentina's foreign minister in 1967 and quickly caught on as a popular means of representing the perceived injustice at the heart of the NPT
[29] Sagan (1996) is the seminal text on "causes of proliferation". Although, he includes domestic politics as a driver too, he falls into the trap of separating status from security which is common to mainstream proliferation puzzling. Some other notable examples: Jo and Gartzke (2007) and Epstein (1977)
[30] See Williams and Croft (1991) for a British example.

that demand a material measurable manifestation of status distinct from security (Chapter 3). By taking a discursive approach this thesis will seek to address this issue from a different angle by showing and analysing how the UK has used its nuclear weapons policy to perform a privileged identity in relation to various Others through its foreign policy discourse.[31] Thus, by focusing instead on what privileged identity constructions the UK *does* articulate with its nuclear weapons policy, rather than trying to get into the mind of nuclear decision makers and judge between the dubious binary of prestige and security, this approach overcomes the methodological shortcomings that plague the debate around this issue (Chapter 3).

Thesis Objectives and Outline

This thesis is ambitious in scale and complexity. The puzzles addressed are not distinct, and the empirics are often mutually constitutive or, to borrow Connolly's formulation, each puzzle "morphs into energized complexities of mutual imbrication and interinvolvement" (Cited in Bialasiewicz et al., 2007, p. 870). Therefore, I suggest, that the representations which make up the UK's nuclear discourse while individually interesting - each could justify a thesis in themselves - do not in isolation prove sufficient to answer my research question. To do that, I need to show their relationship to each other and how this has changed over time. What I have sacrificed in depth, I hope to more than make up for by taking a holistic approach that identifies and analyses a range of representations relating to identity and policy across the periods.[32]

Broadly speaking then, this thesis has three separate but related objectives: First, this thesis will show the how a discursive problematization of nuclear weapons *maintenance* opens up a new and rich agenda for nuclear weapons research. A discursive ontology permits analysis of the wealth of empirics positivism precludes: the millions of words that have accompanied governments' nuclear weapons policies. As Chapter 4 argues, the fabulously textual nature of the empirics that constitute the nuclear weapons debate indicate the "battle over truth" is likely to remain fierce until either nuclear war or disarmament occurs. Indeed, nuclear weapons discourse could scarcely provide a more suitable object of analysis for post-structuralist scholarship. While the UK makes a particularly suitable case, this thesis lays the groundwork for post-positivist scholars to investigate and unsettle other societies' *nuclear regimes of truth*.

[31] This I suggest might be termed *status-seeking* – when an actor represents itself as distinguished and superior in some way to its peers. But status itself is social and dependent on recognition. Therefore this can only constitute part of the story of acquiring status: the next step would be to investigate to see to what extent other actors in the international recognise, reinforce and reproduce the UK's privileged identity. However, for the purposes of maintenance, domestic recognition of these status-seeking moves would be at least as important.

[32] Obviously this thesis would benefit from even more depth: more newspapers, more oppositional discourse than just the parliamentary debate. However, sadly given time and length constraints, I have had to draw the line at the official policy discourse and *The Times*. I hope, however, to have the opportunity to investigate the wider media coverage of the UK's nuclear weapons policy, and the oppositional discourse at a later date.

Second, this thesis' brings the representation of policy out from the background of post-structuralist theorizing about the social world. By redressing the balance between identity and policy in the nexus, I illustrate how changing constructions of the logic of legitimacy, the representation of the policies' effects, and indeed the name of the policy have been integral to stabilising the UK's foreign policy discourse and enabling nuclear maintenance. The analysis will also illustrate the importance of the changing and multiple constructions of the Self and Other, but take care to relate them to constructions of policy. I also show how bringing representations of desirability into the nexus can expand the scope of foreign policies that the nexus can be used to analyse

Finally, the success of these ambitions – whether my thesis sinks or swims - rests on the empirical findings. The post-structuralist conception of discourse precludes making causal claims: here, policy and identity are treated as mutually constitutive, unstable and linked through discourse, so delineating independent causal variables is impossible.[33] However, this is a productive decision not a weakness: it permits the analysis of discursive that empirics positivist scholars' ontology and epistemology forces them to ignore, and thus allows the investigation of a host of puzzles hitherto un-touched. Indeed, the following chapters analysis allow this thesis to make several theoretically informed, and empirically grounded inferences about how the UK has maintained its nuclear weapons from Thatcher to Blair, Trident I to Trident II. While neither definitive nor bullet proof, my claims should at least offer useful additional insight into the UK's nuclear weapons policy. This thesis proceeds as follows.

Chapter 2 discusses the post-structuralist ontology and epistemology and the theoretical framework that undergirds my analysis, both critiquing and developing Lene Hansen's Foreign Policy/Identity nexus. Next, Chapter 3 locates this thesis in the space left mostly untouched so far by British nuclear weapons research; it argues that the security, prestige, domestic politics and identity explanations found in the literature do not adequately address the puzzles identified above. Chapter 4 sketches out, and analyses the implications of the international discursive economy surrounding nuclear weapons that enables and constrains the UK's nuclear foreign policy. Chapter 5 analyses Thatcher's nuclear regime of truth, and how her foreign policy discourse represented the purchase of Trident as legitimate and desirable. Chapter 6 investigates how New Labour imaginatively remodelled the nuclear regime truth for the 21st

[33] Considering language to be productive, then the content of the object named is given by each individual utterance. Therefore, one cannot isolate constructions of either identity or policy in a manner consistent with causality in the positivist sense.

century to overcome the instabilities in the discourse prompted by the end of the Cold War. Chapter 7 concludes by tying the analysis together: it discusses the continuity and change of the UK's nuclear regime of truth across both periods in relation to the empirical puzzles; discusses the theoretical implications for Hansen's foreign policy nexus; and finally, it ends by suggesting what practical use these insights offer to the international nuclear weapons agenda.

Chapter 2

Discourse, Foreign Policy and Identity

The biggest fable of all is the fable of knowledge. One would like to know what things-in-themselves are; but behold, there are no things-in-themselves!

- Friedrich Nietzsche*, The Will to Power,* 1967 [1885]

This chapter elaborates the discursive ontology, epistemology and analytical framework that provide the foundations for this thesis' problematization. First, though, locating my research within Jackson's methodological typology (Jackson, 2011) will help clarify what sort of knowledge this thesis seeks to produce by utilizing this chapter's theorization of discourse. Although post-structuralist discourse analysis eludes easy classification (Leira, 2011),[34] Jackson's characterization of *analyticism* captures well my approach here*:* "a strategy involving the instrumental oversimplification of complex actual situations; these deliberate oversimplifications or ideal types, are then utilized to form case specific analytical narratives that explain particular outcomes" (2011, p. 141).[35] Indeed, the following conceptualisation of discourse should be understood as an extremely *blank* ideal-type. This blank ideal-type will then be used to construct an analytical narrative that illuminates the historical contingency and the function of power involved in the (re)production of knowledge that enables of maintenance of the UK's nuclear weapons. The later chapters do not seek to "test" discourse as an empirical theory, but *use* this conceptualisation as a tool to produce useful insights about my specific case[36]

The chapter proceeds in three steps. The first section develops the broader post-structuralist informed conception of discourse I will use for this thesis: how it works and why it matters. This conception draws on the work of several authors, in particular Foucault, Lene Hansen, Iver

[34] While post-structuralism has a philosophical ontology that is explicitly monist, in terms of scientific ontology, post-structuralism resides between and around the borderlines of what Jackson (2011) labels analyticism and reflexivism.

[35] Jackson here was setting out ideal types of categorising research and not post-structuralism specifically; as will be elaborated later, I do not seek to "explain" in the independent causal sense.

[36] While this is an exploratory case study, my goal is to demonstrate the utility of this version of discourse analysis for investigating the maintenance of nuclear weapons, rather than to generate generalizable hypotheses based on my empirical findings.

Neumann, and Ole Waever. However, the following is not intended to an attempt to either unify these authors work, or provide an exhaustive explanation of the ways in which post-structuralists understand discourse. Rather, the following section presents my *working* conception of discourse that underpins chapters 4, 5 and 6's. Along the way, I will discuss its relevance to my case, and reflect upon how this affects the epistemological status of my claims. The section will ends by suggesting how a discursive approach could be used to reconceptualise nuclear-armed states as "nuclear regimes of truth" and how this provides fruitful angle for research into nuclear weapon possession more generally. The middle section of the chapter develops the foreign policy specific conceptual apparatus I will use to structure my analysis: Lene Hansen's Foreign Policy/Identity analytical framework. Rather than merely *using* Hansen's framework, I expand Hansen's conceptual apparatus by theorizing the representation of policies, their effects, and the logic of legitimacy at work within them. I will also discuss how Hansen's framework can be modified to understand how states perform policies to produce positive outcomes, and *seek status*. With these modifications, I will show how her framework can be modified to provide insight on how long-term foreign policies – such as the maintenance of the UK's nuclear weapons – are possible. Finally, the chapter concludes by explaining how I put theory into practice through my method and the limitations inherent in the process.

Discursive Ontology & Epistemology

Post structuralism takes language as ontologically significant. Given that this remains relatively radical position, and that the ontological assumptions are vital for understanding the epistemological basis for my conclusions, the first half of this chapter provides a detailed discussion of how discourse can be conceptualised and why it can be considered to matter.[37] I proceed by making several value commitments that underpin my problematization: how discourse constitutes meaning, how it is inescapable, political, unstable, reflects power, and how it both enables and limits agency. Next I will discuss the social, relational and political post-structuralist conception of identity and the inside/outside or Self/Other dichotomies.[38] The final section of the first half explains what questions discourse opens up for research, what it forecloses, and how this relates to the question of British nuclear weapons maintenance.

[37] Well becoming ever less so, but not sufficiently that I do not have to explain it in particular depth. Indeed, Jackson (2011), whose empirical work usually takes discursive ontology, advises post-positivist scholars to do this in his landmark work on IR methodology, *The Conduct of Enquiry*

[38] I do not claim to have succeeded in unifying the disparate scholars that loosely fit under the label post-structuralist, but rather the reading of "post-structuralist" conception of discourse that I use for this thesis. Although I sometimes write post-structuralists "believe", "hold" and so on, I do this for ease of understanding and to avoid the impression that I believe this is the only acceptable ontology or epistemological position.

Humans Cannot Escape Discourse

Everything in the social world—material and ideational—is given meaning through language. A tree that falls in the woods still falls in the woods regardless of whether someone discursively gives that occurrence meaning, but it only has significance to the social world once its meaning has been understood by someone, which necessarily has to be mediated through language (Hansen 2006, p. 18-19). Without the sensory recognition of the tree falling, it still falls, but it does not produce any meaning in the social world. In Lene Hansen's words: "It is only through the construction of language that "things"—Objects, subjects states, living beings and material structures—are given meaning and endowed with a particular identity"(Hansen,2007, p.18). Post-structuralism does not refute a mind independent world, but restricts investigation to the world humans access through their senses, and understand through language: "The limits of my language mean the limits of my world" (Wittgenstein, 1961 §5.6, cited in Jackson, 2011, p.136) However, post-structuralists hold that meaning all is constituted *through* language, meanings cannot be reduced to the rules of language. (Foucault, 2012 [1972])

When representations fit together into a system of meanings that structure an actor's understanding of the world this can be understood as a "discourse". Collectively, the following authors capture how I will conceive of discourse in this thesis. For Dunne "discourses are comprised of signifying sequences that constitute more or less coherent frameworks for what can be said and done" (Dunne, 2008, p. 79). To Bialasiewicz et al. (2007, p. 406): "Discourse refers to a specific series of representations and practices through which meanings are produced, identities constituted, social relations established, and political and ethical outcomes made more or less possible.[39] Neumann captures the enabling and constraining qualities of discourse when he suggests that discourse constitutes the "preconditions for action" (2008, p. 62). Discourses can overlap, compete, complement, contradict and so on, but for a human to make sense of something and act accordingly this requires that "thing" to be mediated through discourse. Moreover, for an actor to produce a meaningful statement, they have to produce a statement that relates to an existing discourse in some way. It follows then, that provided utterances are recorded in some form of text, that the social world can be studied through analysing the discursive representations present in those texts[40].

However, if an analyst considered language and discourse as perfectly transparent—an a-political tool for reflecting the social world —as positivists do, this alone would not make

[39] It is worth clarifying that David Campbell is the second author on this work: Performing Security: The imaginative strategies of current US strategy(Bialasiewicz et al.,2007)

[40] Foreign policy is an extremely talkative realm that also a great deal of what is said. Therefore it is ideally suited to discourse analysis.

analysing discourse anything but a second-hand, over-complicated mode of investigation. However, post-structuralists, and this thesis, understand language differently.

Language Is Not Innocent but Political

What makes discourse a fertile avenue for investigation for post-structuralists is that they do not consider language to be a transparent nor "innocent" tool for describing the world (Diez, 1999, p. 599). No particular understanding of an object or occurrence can be considered inevitable, natural or ever a pre-discursive fact. Thus post structuralism "rejects the correspondence principle which says the meaning of words is the objects to which they refer in favour of a constitutive principle which says meaning develops through discursive practice" (Mohan 1990; 135). Indeed, rather than reflecting the world, Foucault (2012, p. 55) argues "discourses as practices that *systematically form* the objects of which they speak." (my emphasis) As Shapiro puts it, language becomes not just a means of apprehension but a "reality producing force" (2012, p. 21) These discursive practices condition the ways in which the same objects are understood and thus the realm of actions that result from the understanding. For example, take two people who have seen the same fallen tree: Ted might exclaim "Oh look, a fallen tree, it must have been windy last night" and so Ted takes his axe and begins chop firewood from the fallen tree. Meanwhile, Dave understands the same event differently and screams: "The holy tree fell – it's the apocalypse!" before promptly slitting his wrists as custom dictates. Each example describes the same event, but each understanding is dependent upon the discourse through which the actor interprets the event, which in turn produces widely different outcomes[41]. How those discourses, and the understandings they constitute came to be regarded as correct or natural is not, according to post-structuralists, a meritocratic process, but an expression of power. Similarly, the conventional wisdom that the UK's nuclear weapons deterred the Soviet Union would not be viewed by post-structuralists as natural or logical outcome of reasoned knowledge acquisition but rather a function of political discursive power.

Knowledge and Power

Indeed, language to post-structuralists is inherently political. The process of ascribing meaning to objects, events, ideas, time periods (everything that can be articulated with language) requires the privileging of one representation, or system of representation, or discourse, over another. Rather than the natural or inevitable function of logic and progress and knowledge accumulation, post-structuralists take Foucault's suggestion that the production of meaning is

[41] I realised after I wrote this that my formulation is quite similar to Laclau and Mouffe (1985, p. 108): "An earthquake or the falling of a brick is an event that certainly exists, in the sense that it occurs here and now, independently of my ill. But whether their specificity as objects is constructed in terms of natural phenomena or 'expressions of the wrath of God' depends upon the structuring of a discursive field"

best understood as "a violence which we do to things, or in any case as practice with which we impose on them" (cited in Shapiro, 1984, p. 127). Whether discursive practices gain currency or dominance within a discourse is considered a function of the social power of the articulating subjects within a discourse, rather than being dependent upon how accurately they reflect "reality". However, power here does not mean physical power to coerce, but productive power that produces meaning, constituting objects through practice (discursive and non-discursive):

> What makes power hold good, what makes it accepted, is simply the fact that it doesn't only weigh on us as a force that says no, but traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces discourse. It needs to be considered as a productive network which runs through the whole social body, much more than as a negative instance whose function is repression. (Foucault, 1980, p. 119)

A state might represent and therefore represent an individual as a "terrorist" and successfully legitimise a policy of indefinite detention. However, this power to inscribe meanings that successfully legitimise actions is not evenly spread. A government's capacity to constitute a person as a terrorist is likely to be easier than the ability of the subject to constitute themselves as a "freedom fighter" within the same society.[42] The meaning attached in this case is clearly contested, political and materially consequential.[43] However, this is not to suggest that governments always win: while the constructed nature of terrorism might often be silenced by hegemonic discourse present in a society, casting a glance over the life of Nelson Mandela suggests marginalised voices can sometimes trump governments' institutional advantages. Indeed, in international nuclear discourse, Tannenwald (2005, pp. 20–25) argues that a "coalition of the weak" comprised the anti-nuclearist movement which succeeded in stigmatizing the use of nuclear weapons. By producing a "nuclear taboo" they helped marginalize the discourse produced by leading members of the US government that sought to "conventionalize" nuclear use.

[42] Der Derrian (2005, p. 25) draws attention to the constructed nature of this discourse when he suggests terrorist can become a freedom fighter and vice versa "in the blink of an eye".

[43] It is worth here addressing a common critique (or straw man) that mistakes post-structuralism for philosophical idealism (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985). Taking a discursive ontology does not mean that post-structuralists deny the existence of a physical reality. If the US accidently dropped a nuclear bomb on Alexander Wendt's house, post structuralists would not claim that Wendt's misfortune was a figment of our collective imagination. Rather, that the particular inter-subjective understanding one holds about an event depends upon the particular discourse one is party to, or draws from. For example, a nuclear activist may interpret it as proof of the impossibility of managing nuclear weapons safely and call for immediate abolishment of nuclear weapons. Meanwhile, a member of the security community would certainly consider Wendt's new homelessness unfortunate, but may consider it a price worth paying for the peace-ensuring meaning they assign to US nuclear weapons. The policy preference that leads from such perception would not be immediate disarmament, but greater investment in nuclear weapon safety mechanisms. Thus the discursive economy from which one draws, can imply radically different understandings of the same event and very different political outcomes, it does not imply that that event is any less real.

Turning to the British case, whether the UK's nuclear weapons are constituted as "weapons of mass destruction" or as an "insurance policy" depends upon the productive power – social position – within a discourse. In the UK (and in most states) the government has considerable – though not hegemonic - productive power within society to produce, regulate, circulate, and distribute statements regarding the meaning of the country's nuclear weapons.[44] In this way UK governments seek to produce what resembles what I understand by Foucault's term: "regime of truth"; a more or coherent discourse surrounding the UK's nuclear weapons that produces and reproduces knowledge that enables their maintenance and cyclical renewal.[45] Step outside the UK's regime of truth and people will be unlikely to represent the UK's nuclear weapons as a peace-bringing insurance policy. However, even within the UK, as the term *regime* implies, regimes of truth require maintenance.

Discourses May Be Reproduced, Stable but Never Fixed

Post-structuralists hold that discourses are inherently unstable and therefore for them to remain in currency they are in constant need of reproduction. Foucault (2012) illustrates how discourses are constituted by unique statements that can be re-articulated verbatim, across time and space, which while reproducing the discourse which they constitute, can never be exactly identical due to the temporal and special uniqueness of a statement when they are enunciated.[46] Discourses, which statements and the representations within constitute - even relatively stable uncontested ones - are therefore in continual flux and must be reproduced though material and discursive practices. These structures and processes may be institutionalised and thus appear natural, de-politicised and fixed; the Copenhagen School refer to these as "sedimented practices" (Buzan, Waever, & De Wilde, 1998, p. 205). Nonetheless, to post-structuralists their continuance is always contingent on their reproduction through (discursive and non-discursive) practice. The state is probably the most famous example of a discursively produced, ontologically unstable but seemingly fixed institution that post-structuralists have sought to unsettle (Campbell, 1998; Dunn, 2010; C. Weber, 1998). In the case

[44] I am paraphrasing Foucault (1980, p. 133) here regarding the workings of productive power and truth: "Truth is to be understood as a system of ordered procedures for the production, regulation, distribution, circulation and operation of statements. Truth is linked in a circular relation with systems of power that produce and sustain it, and to effects of power that induce and extend it".

[45] That is not to say that the UK has a monopoly on representing its foreign policy, nor that its ability to speak with uncontested on such foreign policy is fixed (indeed the Iraq war and fiasco surrounding the "sexed up" dossier on Iraq's non-existent WMDs has certainly shaken the UK government's credibility recently). Rather, that governments, the UK included, typically construct an authority based on reported superior information, expertise, and draw on the old idea that foreign policy demands national unity, which can have the effect of marginalising and disciplining dissident voices of oppositional discourses. To varying degrees the UK press, extremely aggressive in domestic matters, to a certain extent seems to accept this reasoning and tends to privilege the government's representation of foreign policy above dissenting voices.

[46] As Foucault (2012) [1972] suggests.

of the UK's nuclear weapons discourse, the representation that Labour lost the 1983 and 1987 elections because of their anti-nuclear policy has begun to reify, reproduced by scholars, the media and politicians as a fixed historical "fact". Nonetheless, this, like any other institution (or representation) still depends upon those actors reproduction for it to remain in currency.

The Construction of Collective Identities: The Self/Other

Pertinently for this thesis, this conception of discourse as ontologically significant, allows the fruitful investigation of collective identity formation. For Post-structuralists, the image of the self is "inextricably interwoven with images of the other" (Neumann, 1992, p. 225). Whether a state, religion, or football team, to know what you are, is to know what you are not. This negative juxtaposition of the Self to the Other can be understood as an ongoing *"process of differentiation"* through which meaning is generated through juxtaposition with its opposite (Hansen, 2006, p.19) For example, within UK government's Cold War discourse, the UK Self was constituted as 'peaceful', and 'democratic', through the process of differentiation with the 'authoritarian' and 'aggressive' Soviet Other. Because collective identities are always constituted by juxtaposition to some Other they are considered to be always *relational.* Most discourses contain multiple signs depicting the Self/Other dichotomy. The *"positive process of linking*" describes process through which signs constituting a particular identity appear to be at least somewhat consistent with each other reinforcing the holistic meaning found in the discourse (Hansen, 2006, p. 19). In the previous example, the representations of 'democratic', 'peaceful' and 'liberal' positively link with each other to constitute and reinforce the West's self-identity in the discourse. As with all representations, discursive constructions of Self/Other collective identities can never remain perfectly stable: they require maintenance, reproduction and may face challenges from rival discourses. Consequently, collective identities must be treated as multifaceted, ambiguous and open ended, rather than bounded or fixed (Neumann, 1999, p. 36.) Ultimately, conceiving of identity in perpetual flux opens the door to investigating ongoing the battle and negotiation of collective identities and the political consequences of the process.

However, Hansen (2006, p. 37) suggests the process of differentiation need not always be radically different: analysts should "allow the concept of identity to assume *degrees of otherness*" (original emphasis). For example, she cites the construction of Nordic identity in Europe as a non-radical Other, and the ambiguity and complexity depicted in Said's (1978) account of Western Orientalist discourse which sometimes depicts the Other as "exotic", "mysterious" and "attractive". Meanwhile, she draws on Neumann's description of the pro-European Russian discourse in which an inferior Self is differentiated with a superior Other (1996). Thus, Hansen's theorization of *degrees of otherness* might be considered a functional

innovation rather than an invention: a pleasingly intuitive term that helps rectify a tendency in critical scholarship to focus on radical Othering (see for example Campbell, 1998). Indeed, conceiving of identity formation in this way can provide insight the many relationships in the international not characterised by hostility, but by trust and/or non-violent rivalry.[47] The theoretical implications of investigating non-radical Othering, and how it can be linked to status seeking will be developed in the second half of this chapter which discusses Hansen's conceptual apparatus for analysing foreign policy discourse in more depth.

Agency and Constraints

However, post-structuralists do not presume that discourse offers perfect agency in producing the meaning of the world around them, rather, discourses both enable and constrain human agency (R. K. Ashley, 1989; Hansen, 2006, pp. 32–33; Neumann, 2008). They constrain in the sense that an individual only has finite discursive resources to draw upon, but enable in that the actor can potentially choose between discourses, has the almost infinite flexibility language affords, and thus also allow the speaker to alter and produce variants on existing representations. Therefore, to use Judith Butler's (1997) terminology, identities are "performative"; they involve "the reiterative and citation practice by which discourse produces the effects that it names" (C. Weber, 1998, p. 78: paraphrasing Butler, 1992). The identity represented and the discourse it is located within is only brought into existence, constituted, produced and reproduced through the repetition of meaning producing discursive "performances". Each performance is itself dependent upon, and once uttered, constituent of the performative architecture – through which "norms [or any socially mediated object] are constructed though repeated but varied performative acts" (C. Weber, 1998; 82). While one could technically produce an entirely new representation without any reference to past discourse, in practice, particularly in politics, it would be extremely difficult to generate acceptance, especially in a field populated by rivals with established representations to draw upon (Buzan et al., 1998; Krebs & Jackson, 2007). This is why identities cannot be considered just a matter of a singular performance, with all the flexibility that implies (C. Weber, 1998, p. 80) and why arguing that discourse matters does not imply that changing the social world is a matter of just thinking differently. Neumann (2008, p. 63) provides a lucid explanation of how this insight allows us to think of discourse and how it constrains human agency:

[47] See Bull (2002) [1977] for the classic discussion of "order" in international relations. Meanwhile, Wheeler (Ruzicka & Wheeler, 2010; Wheeler, 2009a, 2009b, 2012) provides several more recent examples in his research agenda that takes "trust" as its object of analysis.

> Because discourse maintains a degree of regularity in social relations, it produces preconditions for action. It constrains how the stuff that the world consists of is ordered, and so how people categorize and think about the world. It constrains what is thought of at all, an what is thought of as possible, and what is thought of as the ”natural” thing to do in a given situation” in a given situation (Neumann 2008, p. 63)

Neumann focuses here on the constraints, but as the above description implies, the *degree* of regularity and flexibility of discourse itself affords changes. This depends upon varying degrees of stability of particular discourses, which in turn affects the degree of agency actors have to produce varied representations within them. Therefore, Neumann (Ibid) suggests discourse analysis can be used to investigate how discourse constrains and enables a “*bandwidth* of possible outcomes” (my emphasis). A good example from the literature of how discourse limits what we can think of is provided by Hugh Gusterson (1999a) who argues that the Security Studies “discourse community” was constrained by their shared belief system that privileged military hardware’s importance in assessing the identity and intentions of the enemy, limiting how they could interpret Gorbachev’s reforms in the late 1980s. Their shared discursive frame, argues Gusterson, lead them to “miss the end of the Cold War” even as the drama unfolded around them.

Discourse, Context and History

It should go without saying then, that discourse cannot be separate from context, nor history. One cannot grasp the meaning of an utterance or a representation from careful study of language alone as classically illustrated by Lakoff and Johnson (2003, p. 12) [1980] using the famous sentence: “Please sit in the apple juice seat”. Regardless of the expertise an analyst possesses in language, without having been party to the earlier days’ events when a jug of apple juice sat by particular seat, they could only speculate as to what this sentence might mean. The significance of context, history and culture to the meanings of utterances implies that analysing the social world through lenses which ignore it has limited utility, as Neumann suggests of Habermas’ ideal of pure argumentation:

> In Habermasian "discourse ethics," the self and other are still ideally lodged in "ideal speech situations"—abstracted from power and indeed from the multiplicities of social bonds other than the bond of reasoned discourse. It is probably because of this lack of social placement that the most striking thing about the theorizing that has followed this path is its seemingly limited ability to offer new insights about collective identity formation (Neumann, 1999, p. 10).

Indeed, constructivists have long emphasised context and history for understanding International Relations. Wendt’s (1992) famous critique of neo-neo-realism takes a similar tack when he criticises their static focus on capabilities to explain state behaviour: one cannot explain the US’s friendly relations with the UK without reference to their intersubjective

understanding of history. However, post-structuralists would not take the representation of those interactions between states for granted, but rather seek to understand how those historical patterns of interaction (the identities represented within them and the interactions themselves) have been (re)produced through discourse(s) (see for example Weldes, 1996). Indeed, the US's support for Britain in WWII can be represented as a sign of the US's commitment to Europe, or their failure to join the war until Pearl Harbour can be represented as proof of the US's unreliability. Thus, context and history are important, but one cannot take for granted how history will be mobilized, and which version of history will predominate. Post-structuralism, sensitive to the "radical undecidability of history" (R. K. Ashley, 1989, p. 272), provides the tools to disrupt the reification of history and reveal the machinations of productive power in disciplining subjectivities and ultimately, how this produces the bounds of conceivable political practice. For example, in Chapters 5 and 6 I will deconstruct the axiomatic (re)production of the UK's "nuclear peace" representation, and show how this makes possible particular policies.

From "Meta Babble" to International Relations: Nuclear Regimes of Truth[48]

As noted above, this thesis manhandles Foucault in order to conceptualise the UK's nuclear discourse as a "nuclear regime of truth".[49] This might beg the question Why not just "UK nuclear discourse"?[50] I hold that conceiving of nuclear weapon-armed states as maintaining *nuclear regimes of truth* can help frame investigation into the hitherto unproblematic phenomena of nuclear weapon possession. First, in borrowing from the political-economic domain, the term *regime of truth* emphasises how actors within states have political power and thus a degree of agency in maintaining and modifying the discourse that shapes a society's understanding of their nuclear weapons within the social world. However, *regime* also emphasises that maintenance requires at least some of the general public consume, reproduce, or at least acquiesce to the representations constituting the discourse.[51] Second, Foucault's assertion that "each society has its [own] regime of truth" (1980, p.131) (my emphasis) captures how this thesis suggests nuclear weapons states' discourses should be analysed in their specificity, rather

[48] A popular pejorative term for the practice of post-structuralism in IR, first coined by Fred Halliday (1996), I now move to reclaim it.

[49] To premeditate criticism that this is not the way Foucault intended his ideas to be used, I offer Foucault's own explanation of what he does with Nietzsche: "The only valid tribute to thought such as Nietzsche's is precisely to use it, to deform it, to make it groan and protest. And if commentators say that I am being faithful or unfaithful to Nietzsche, that is of absolutely no interest."(Foucault, 1980,p. 53)

[50] Indeed, without explanation it might appear a pretentious semantic move naming the UK nuclear discourse as a *regime of truth.*

[51] I am thinking here of Gene Sharp's famous guide to peaceful protest in which he suggests that government regimes only appear strong while the individuals participate in the day to day functioning. Remove the ordinary people's minor day-to-day practices and the regime will fall apart (Sharp, 1973).

than *merely* constitutive of wider transnational discourses. Discourses in the abstract do not respect boundaries—Chapter 4, 5 and 6 illustrate how the UK does share, draw from, and twist other transnational nuclear discourses—however, naming nuclear weapon-armed states as "nuclear regimes of truth" encourages investigation into the peculiarities of states' nuclear narratives and practices: how states might draw representations from a wider discursive economy but "nationalize" them for domestic audiences. Indeed, the UK nuclear discourse has several representations that probably travel poorly, and cease to function at the Cliffs of Dover. One example here is Thatcher's representation that NATO would crumble without the UK's nuclear weapons (Chapter 5). Indeed, a multitude of other representations found in the UK nuclear discourse (re)produce an international political nuclear geography that while intelligible and resonant within UK society, would probably be alien to much of the rest of the world, even to an extent its stated-allies.

This thesis holds that investigating how these specific discursive practices have formed, maintained and modified a uniquely British nuclear regime of truth—the beating heart of which I suggest is the UK governments' foreign policy performances[52]—can illuminate how the material practice of maintaining its nuclear weapons has been possible. But it also follows that other nuclear-armed states have their own functioning nuclear regimes of truth, undoubtedly different, but equally worthy of investigation. Thus, conceiving of the UK as a "nuclear regime of truth" helps to frame and focus this analysis, but can also stimulate the problematization of other states nuclear maintenance. The following sections of this chapter will now develop an analytical framework specific to foreign policy, to make sense of it.

Analysing Foreign Policy Discourse

The next section will discuss and modify the conceptual framework explicated in Lene Hansen's landmark post-structuralist text *Security as Practice*. Post-structuralists have often focused on challenging and deconstructing *doxa* that permeate traditional IR theories. However, its practitioners have long been accused of lacking methodological rigour and of lacking relevance

[52] I explain my decision to focus on government official discourse in the methods section at the end of this chapter. However, it is worth noting here that while I would argue that the government has the most agency within the society to modify the UK's nuclear discourse and to change the material policy, one could fruitfully approach a nuclear regime of truth from several other levels. I would expect that the official discourse is relatively well dispersed within UK society and thus micro-conversations with the general public, in the writings the British nuclear security scholars, and certainly the press, would provide a reasonable *reflection* of the UK's official nuclear discourse. Indeed, arguably the UK press in has considerable power to discipline politicians into maintaining a pro-nuclear discourse. Further, although a difficult to engineer, an investigating the administrative practices of the Ministries of Defence, or as Gusterson (1998) illustrated, the practices and discourse at the level of the laboratory, would also provide insights into the functioning of a state's nuclear regime of truth.

to the "real world". Lene Hansen (2006) *Security as Practice* is a direct and emphatic response to these critics. While building on her post-structuralist peers' work, she organises their insights and develops a systematic methodology and theory for investigating the relationship between foreign policy and identity, constituted through discourse. Hansen's (2006, p. 1) goal is explicitly to show how post-structuralist discursive epistemology and ontology can be utilised to "create a theoretically vibrant and rigorous research agenda that speaks to pertinent political issues". I intend to demonstrate that British nuclear weapons policy is one pertinent political issue that post-structuralist discourse analysis can illuminate.

Before moving on, it is necessary to make clear the epistemological goals and limitations of discourse analysis so conceived. This section discusses, and this thesis mobilises, Hansen's theory of the relationship between foreign policy and identity linked through discourse. However, Hansen's foreign policy nexus is not a "substantive theory" but rather an "analytical theory.[53] Hansen provides a conceptual apparatus for analysing historically *specific* cases; it does not seek to produce generalizable theory true across time and space. Unlike, for example, democratic peace theory that has substantive content that is used to predict social relations, the content of identity and foreign policy theory is entirely dependent on the discursive constructions produced by the actors and discourses found in a particular case.[54] Instead of asking "why" questions, Hansen's theory lends itself for structured analysis of what Doty (1993, p. 298) calls "*how possible*" questions, which "[e]xamine how meanings are produced and attached to various social subjects/objects, thus constituting particular interpretive dispositions which create certain possibilities and preclude others". Thus, in Hansen's theoretical framework, the identities and foreign policy objects of analysis exist as perfectly blank slates to be filled in from the texts investigated. Hansen does not posit that she expects a specific identity to "cause" a specific foreign policy or vice versa, nor should an analyst expect a specific discourse to be present in any given case. Hansen's framework is best understood as a theoretically informed tool for interpreting, understanding and inferring about the social world,

[53] Wendt (1987, p. 355) discussing "structuration theory" provides a concise account of the difference: "Structuration theory is an "analytical" rather than "substantive" theory, in the sense that it is about the analysis rather than the substance of the social world. Structuration theory says something about what kinds of entities there are in the social world and how their relationship should be conceptualized, and as such it provides a conceptual framework or meta-theory for thinking about real world social systems, but it does not tell us what particular kinds of agents or what particular kinds of structures to expect in any given concrete social system."

[54] But even if one wanted to generalize from post-structuralist discourse analysis, or one based on Hansen's conceptual framework, ontological obstacles logically foreclose it. It is only through the discursive performance of foreign policy that identity comes into being, but this identity is at the same time constructed as the legitimization for the policy proposed (Hansen 2007, 21). While the performative nature of identities may make some stable collective identities appear fixed, they are never unique and are constantly in need of reproduction (see above). Thus identities and foreign policies cannot be separated nor considered fixed, and therefore, this precludes post-structural investigations attempting to isolate causes and generalize about identities in the rationalist manner (Hansen, 2006, pp. 23–25)

or as Dunne (2008, p. 85) puts his humble epistemological goal, making "reasonably informed conjectures".

The following half of the chapter develops Hansen's theoretical framework for analysing foreign policy. This first section briefly outlines Hansen's basic conception of the *Foreign Policy/Identity Nexus* that undergirds this thesis' analytical framework. The next section discusses Hansen's theorization of spatial, ethical, and temporal identity, before suggesting how her conception of *degrees of otherness* in identity construction can help identify *status seeking* by states. The third section argues that Hansen's analytical tools privilege identity representations and under-theorize policy representation, and overemphasise the "security" logic of legitimacy. To address these weaknesses this final section draws on *nukespeak* and Lakoff to develop further her theorization of policy representations, and then creates a post-structuralist definition of legitimacy that can capture more fully the various (technically infinite) logics of legitimacy available to foreign policy makers.

The Foreign Policy/Identity Nexus

To Hansen (2006, p. 52), "Foreign policy discourse is identified as the construction of identity, policy and the link between them".[55] Hansen suggests that the goal of foreign policy makers "is to present a foreign policy that appears *legitimate and enforceable* to its relevant audience." As I will argue later in the chapter, creating a distinct category, and thus analysing how foreign policy makers seek to represent their policies as "desirable" usefully expands the scope of the nexus. To achieve these goals policy makers key aim is "the construction of a link between policy and [collective] identity that makes the two appear consistent with each other." (Hansen, 2006, p. 28 [my emphasis]) Hansen suggests theorizing foreign policy/identity nexus as a basic model in which policy makers constantly work to stabilise the link between identities and policy. For example, a foreign policy performance that represented the UK as "Shoulder to shoulder" in a "War on Terror" with their "close allies" the US would be relatively consistent with Anglo-American "intervention" in a Middle Eastern "Rogue State". Meanwhile failing to join a US "intervention" might make attempting to represent the UK-self as "Shoulder to shoulder" and the US as a "close ally" a little trickier, and thus require adjustments to stabilise.

The above example is an extremely simplified; performing a coherent foreign policy all the time is a complex, nigh on impossible task. The theoretical instability of discourse (discussed above)

[55] It is worth noting that in Hansen's conception of foreign policy discourse, identity and policy are simultaneously performed and mutually constitutive, thus neither identity nor policy can be said to "cause" the other.

is compounded by the complexity of facing policy: the international is in constant flux, characterised by competing interests, norms, ethics, actors, institutions and so on. As Ashley (1987, pp. 409–410, cited in Neumann, 1999, pp.115-116) puts it then, the various fields of the social world (including IR) are "always [the] contested product of multiple practices, multiple alien interpretations which struggle, clash, deconstruct, and displace one another." Moreover, governments tend to perform foreign policies that pursue multiple, often conflicting goals, while articulating multitude representations of identity[56] in a multitude of different contexts.[57] Thus, seeking a stable foreign policy/identity nexus, according to Hansen(2006, p. 29), is a never-ending, extremely difficult quest for a modicum of stability that ultimately can neither have perfect internal coherence, nor appear legitimate to all audiences. Indeed, while governments always try to produce representations that do not destabilise one another, inevitably "slippages" occur. This matters, because failure to present a *relatively* stable foreign policy/identity nexus may leave a government vulnerable to domestic or foreign criticism, which depending on the states situation may force them to change policy, or even destabilise the regime. The analyst then should seek to investigate the "*relative* ability of a discourse to present a construction of identity [and policy] which is not seen as highly unstable."(Hansen, 2006, p. 29)

Internal Instability

As discussed in the previous section, identities are constructed through a series of signs in processes of positive linking and differentiation. If these signs and representations of a given policy discourse appear to contradict or are inconsistent with one another in some way, they can be considered *internally unstable* (Hansen, 2006, pp. 30–31). For example, a discursive representation of Norway as both an "Ethical power" and "world class arms dealer" would be at least somewhat internally unstable. Or, a foreign policy discourse would be unstable if its logic of legitimacy was inconsistent with its collective identity. For example, if a state represents itself as a secular democracy, yet justifies its foreign policy by referring to "god's will" it would likely undermine the government's credibility. These are just exemplars but foreign policy is extremely difficult business: it involves the complex interweaving of discursive resources and the performance of multiple identities in order to present as legitimate and desirable a myriad of practices. Hansen is only stating the obvious when she suggests that "slippage" is inevitable.

[56] Neumann (1999) is quite emphatic about the importance of paying close attention to interplay between the multitude of competing and/or complimentary identity constructions both within the international and within domestic societies.

[57] Indeed, to some the international is analogous to a jungle characterised by lawlessness dominated by physical power, while to others it is complex web of regulation and norms in which a state can barely act without tripping over international law, norm or human right.

External Constraints

Foreign policy is not conducted in vacuum and must be considered within the domestic and international context. As Hansen explains: "foreign policy questions are always articulated within a particular structured discourse field [which] is […] both enabling and constraining for those constructing foreign policies" (Hansen, 2006, p. 30). These constraints can be material or ideational but are always mediated through discourse. This does not imply that the materiality of nuclear weapons are less real, but that the threat or the benefit that they are seen to offer is necessarily understood through discourses which limit the way in which they can be interpreted and represented, and thus acted upon.[58] However, external constraints can never be pre-discursively assumed or taken for granted. One should not presume a particular rationality or interpretation from any particular constellation of material objects. For example, the materiality of Ethiopia's overwhelming size did not stop Eritrea from waging a disastrous war in the 1990s; clearly the leaders did appear to share the dominant material security discourse conception of military capabilities and "rationality". This does not mean that they behaved objectively "irrationally" (such an explanation tells us nothing). Rather, a post-structuralist might seek to understand how representations within the Eritrean domestic elite's discourse led the policy of war to become constituted as desirable, or indeed politically possible.

Challenges

Internally unstable discourses and changes in the external environment may leave a government's foreign policy identity constellation vulnerable to challenges from rival discourses. Challenges can arise from a host of different sources: domestic opposition, international organizations, NGOs, foreign governments, the media and academia, or all of the above.[59] They may challenge any part of a foreign policy constellation: constructions of the Other, the Self, or the policy that links them. How effectively the government can marginalise the alternative representations, and privilege their own, will affect how successfully it can deal with pressure to change the policy (see the Chapter 5 section on Security Logic). Again, this indicates why it is critical to pay close attention to the political context within which foreign policy is enacted; the ability of the opposition to access public foreign policy discourse and contest the government's representations will vary dramatically from case to case.

[58] Nobody disputes the materiality of a dog, but ask a Western European what one does with a dog and they will think of several options, and likely none of them the same as a typical Korean's. This difference can be accounted for by the respective discourses they are party to.

[59] This list is not exhaustive; these are perhaps the sources that one might expect to have the social power to enter into, and affect a national foreign policy debate, but technically anyone, or any group—particularly in the age of high-speed internet—could enter into a national foreign policy discourse.

While internal stability, external constraints, and rival discourses can be separated for analytical purposes they cannot be considered separately but are rather heavily imbricated with one another. After all, it will always be the combination of internal instabilities, external constraints, and challenges from oppositional discourses which are mutually responsible for prompting a particular foreign policy performance in the first place. Indeed, using this thesis as an example, understanding the internal stability of the UK's nuclear weapons foreign policy discourse requires understanding of 1) changing external constraints – the Cold War and the end of the Cold War, and 2) challenges from rival discourses – Labour's 1980s anti-nuclearist discourse. As this thesis will seek to demonstrate, by analysing the interplay between them can shed light on how the UK maintained and renewed its nuclear weapons, from the initial acquisition of Trident in 1980, to the decision to begin renewal in 2006.

Stabilisation Methods

These sources of instability open up the policy/identity nexus to a host of empirical questions and it is worth quoting Hansen (2006, p. 32) at length here:

> The goal of poststructuralism is to study in an empirically rigorous and structured manner the ways in which facts are formed and how they impact on foreign policy debates. How are facts coupled with representations of identity and to particular policies? How do oppositional discourses present critical evidence in the attempt to destabilise official policy? How does governmental discourse respond? Studied in a dynamic perspective, as new facts are presented – whether by the media, governmental agencies, or not governmental institutions – they present possibilities and challenges for officials as well as oppositional discourse. (Hansen, 2006, p. 32)

Chapters 5 and 6 follow up these lines of enquiry in the British case. For example, the UK's construction of its own peaceful identity helps stabilise the stigma of nuclear weapons. Meanwhile, I argue, the discursive reification of the Soviets aggressive identity provides a pre-condition for the UK government's representations that its nuclear weapons have "worked". Regarding challenges, the UK governments in both periods proved adept at disciplining the alternative policy prescriptions of oppositional discourses. To analyse how governments' do this Hansen suggests three idealized ways in which in which discourses respond to challenges to their policy identity constellation (Hansen, 2006; pp.32-3):

First, a government may simply dramatically alter its policy/identity constellation in response to challenges that destabilised its former arrangement. The policy (the practice, the logic and the representation) and the identity of the object of the foreign policy are usually easiest to change significantly, but collective self-identities also have a degree performative flexibility. Hansen calls this *accommodating rival discourses.* The second option involves fitting new "facts"

into the existing discursive framework without significantly altering the policy. These strategies would enable the policy to continue within the same discursive framework, having been altered to accommodate the challenges posed by rival discursive representations of material facts: *modifying the discourse.* For example, while the UK in the 21st century has modified its discourse to concede that nuclear weapons can be eliminated and disarmament is possible, they have not actually altered their core policy of maintaining the UK's nuclear weapons (see Chapter 6). A third option for dealing with challenges involves simply ignoring "facts" that would destabilise the identity and policy constellation. Hansen suggests this is most likely when it is difficult or impossible to formulate a new policy. Derrida (1994, cited in Shapiro, 2012, p. 71) has named this process of ignoring "facts" that would destabilise the discourse, with the rather elegant intuitive phrase "*conjuring away".* Shapiro (2012, p. 76), draws on the term to show how governments frequently conjure away ambiguity in national history to consolidate the narrative of the state. For example, Chapters 5 and 6 will explore how UK governments frequently conjure away any hint of subjectivities in representing the role the UK's nuclear weapons have played in protecting the UK from the Soviet Union.

This thesis uses Hansen's basic foreign policy nexus to structure its analyse of how the UK has produced representations for the international, the UK Self, and its nuclear weapons policy, that made the maintenance of its nuclear weapons appear legitimate, enforceable and *desirable* (see below*)*. However, the above section only outlined the basic foreign/policy nexus model. The next section will discuss and develop the tools that provide further analytical edge to the nexus. Unlike the above section, the following section's critique modify and thus build on Hansen's conceptual apparatus in order to broaden the scope of her theory: specifically to allow it to more effectively analyse long-term foreign policies (like maintaining nuclear weapons), and also suggest how it can be used to isolate instances of *status seeking*.

Analysing Identity

Building on the basic foreign policy identity/nexus model outlined above, Hansen proposes analysing complexity through three lenses: *spatial* identity, *ethical* identity, and *temporal* identity (Hansen, 2006, pp. 37–51). First temporal identity - the most intuitive of the lenses - refers to the representations of identity that pertain to time, progress, change, or lack thereof. For example, development discourses frequently represents countries with a low material standards of living as "developing," which implies that they have the capacity to change and progress to become developed countries. This temporal identity opens up a *bandwidth* of potential foreign policies aiming at development. In contrast, the representation of a "third world" country does not have a temporal dimension; the capacity for change is ambiguous. Add

a representation of the population as a "backwards" and "stubborn" people, and the temporal identity of the country implies that policies aiming for "development" may be futile. To take an example related to this thesis, Neumann (1999, p. 110) argues that the various temporal representations of Russia's identity in European discourse "as the country that is perpetually seen as being in some stage of transition to Europeanization," provide considerable insight into European foreign policy towards it over the last half millennia. As Neumann notes, European discourse has several temporal representations of Russia as "a learner", each with differing implications – whether it be a successful learner, a "misguided one," a "laggard", "truant" or a "gifted but somewhat pig-headed one" - and these have frequently informed European countries' (or NATO and the EU's) respective policies towards their Eastern neighbour.

The representations above can also be considered what Hansen calls *spatial identity* constructions. First, spatial representations embody the literal – anything pertaining to space – for example "The West" represents a series of countries embodying Western Europe the US and perhaps its allies. These may often appear de-politicised, however, as for example Neumann's (2003) dissection of the discourse constituting "Central Europe", and Hansen (2006, p. 113) on whether the Balkans were in "Europe" (or not) during the 90s, illustrate, that impression can be misleading, and thus literal spatial constructions merit scrutiny. However, spatial identity as Hansen conceives of it, also embodies political subjectivities, for example, "evil" "liberal" "threatened", "tyrannical", "militaristic" crazy" and so on. As the last paragraph implies these categories are not distinct, political subjectivities can embody temporal identity too, for example, "developing" constitutes a political subjectivity and a temporal dimension. Like temporal identity, different representations of spatial identities also limit the bandwidth of possible policies. For example, representing another country as authoritarian, brutal and corrupt, and the Self as a human rights advocating, liberal country of conscience, might make providing large quantities aid to that country potentially difficult to legitimise. However, the representation of "developing" alone does not necessarily imply any action is required to help that country develop.

This example leads to the third lens: *ethical identity* pertaining to representations that constitute some kind of responsibility of the Self (person, organisation, group, country etc.) towards something, someone, or some collective. This conception of ethical identity is more ambiguous than the others. As Hansen (2006, pp. 50–51) suggests, when the perhaps the most dominant school of thought regarding foreign policy represents the state as having no ethical responsibility other than to follow the "national interest", ethical identity might appear a redundant category. However, every time the national interest is invoked as a rationale for

policy, this formulation expresses an ethical responsibility towards the people of the country whose national interest is apparently being pursued. Moreover, alternative discourses that constitute ethical responsibility towards different groups have long been found in the international. For example during The Crusades, the Christian discourse, articulated an ethical responsibility on behalf of Christians to protect the Holy Land. This mobilisation of ethical identity permitted, mobilized and legitimized a famously violent campaign against non-believers. Meanwhile more recently, the genocide discourse represents states as having an ethical responsibility to protect human life that must override the "national interest". Which representations of ethical responsibility trump others in a national debate, how they change, and to what effect is an empirical question.[60]

Expanding the Scope of the Foreign Policy/Identity Nexus

The last section discussed the elements of Hansen's framework that I use *as is*. However, through the process of inductively analysing the UK's nuclear foreign policy discourse, the framework seemed increasingly inadequate. This is almost inevitable; ideal types cannot be expected to capture every important representation of each distinct case and should be therefore be supplemented with case specific "coincidental" empirics that are necessary to understand outcomes (Jackson, 2011, p. 150-151).[61] Here for example, the stigmatisation of unilateral disarmament stemming from Labour's election defeats is an example of a case specific cause that does not lend itself to abstraction. However, other important representations of the UK nuclear foreign policy discourse pointed towards weaknesses in Hansen's framework that could be rectified. Further, it also became clear that Hansen's theorizing had un-explored relevance to nebulous question of status in the international. The following section critiques the framework, positing modifications to the conceptual apparatus the later chapters will seek to demonstrate in the British case, with view to use in other cases.

Degrees of Otherness and Status Seeking

First, Hansen's theorization of the degrees of otherness in identity construction can also address the puzzle of how states *seek status*. Status in international relations has long proved troublesome for scholars, particularly those concerned with measuring material empirics.

[60] For example, the genocide discourse is buttressed now by a legal obligation to intervene. However, while successfully presenting an event as genocide perhaps has more discursive power, it has also prompted highly politicized arguments over the representation of events: was it "merely" a massacre or an actual genocide? Accepting the latter implies a legal ethical responsibility, the former could legitimise inaction.

[61] The debate surrounding causation is not one I wish to enter and so although Jackson uses "causal" I have used "understand" here to sidestep the debate. Jackson himself might be called a post-structuralist were it not for his claims that rhetorical commonplaces "cause" things.

Wohlforth (2009, p. 38) gives a succinct explanation of why status eludes mainstream scholarship,"Status is a social, psychological, and cultural phenomenon. Its expression appears endlessly varied; it is thus little wonder that the few international relations scholars who have focused on it are more struck by its variability and diversity than by its susceptibility to generalization". Pouliot (2014, p. 195) fleshes out this social, cultural and variable aspect: "status is an intersubjective and relation ascription that does not depend on any specific point of view for existing. It is necessarily embedded in a set of relationships, in which meaning is inter-subjectively negotiated." Indeed, the trouble for those seeking to count status and generalize is that status is dependent upon recognition from peers, as Paul, Larson and Wohlforth (2014, p. 8) note, "Status cannot be read off a state's material attributes; it depends on other's perceptions. A state's estimate of its status is based in part on interpretation of the behavior and speech of others, a judgment that may leave it either satisfied or dissatisfied with its status." Therefore, if status seems to be variable and unpredictable, instead of seeking to universalize how certain materials, memberships, acts and so on, endow a state with status, an approach that could capture individual incidents of *status seeking* without pre-discursive definition of what status *is,* would be more sensitive to the flux and innovation present in foreign policy.[62] Only once a state has sought status from a particular foreign policy performance, should an analyst try to measure its success.

Hansen's innovative theorization of a process of identity construction that include *degrees Otherness* (see above) offers just such an approach that can identify how states *seek status* amongst their international peer groups. As the last section explained, post-structuralists suggest that identities are produced by a series of juxtapositions positive linking, and differentiation that privileges one set of signs over another: "liberal" might be linked with "democracy" and differentiated with an "authoritarian" "dictatorship". This is an illustration of a Self/radical-Other dichotomy, and while useful in understanding the legitimation of policies against the radical Other, has less utility in analysing how countries seek status amongst their peers. Indeed, in Western Europe, states do not seek, nor bestow status among their neighbours for *not* being a dictatorship. However, introducing *degrees of Otherness* into identity construction allows the identification of how states perform foreign policies that grant them a privileged identity amongst their peer group: in other words how they *seek* privileged *status*. For example, when a state represents itself as "the leader of the free world" it is not only

[62] For example, South Africa manufactured a working nuclear weapon – something often assumed to be a measure of status - yet kept by keeping it secret they neither sought nor received status (nor any deterrent "effect"). Though reductionist, this illuminates clearly the problem with seeking a definition of non-social pre-discursive measures of status. Further, as William and Neumann (2000, p.363) suggest, a state cannot simply claim a particular identity and be done with it; identities require recognition from other actors.

juxtaposing itself with the non-free world, it is making a second non-radical juxtaposition with states that are not leaders. Identifying how states seek status through performing privileged identities is only a possible solution to the first half of the problem: identifying status seeking. As William and Neumann (2000, p.363) suggest, a state cannot simply assert a particular privileged identity for itself and relax; identities require recognition from other actors. How to measure the success of such status seeking could involve a post-structuralist analysis of other states repeating or recognising the privileged identity, and/or it could incorporate more conventional approaches, however this is beyond the scope of this thesis.

Nonetheless, as Chapters 5 and 6 will illustrate, identifying how states perform foreign policies that allow them to constitute a privileged identity for themselves can help us to understand how states present their foreign policy as *desirable.* This formulation – the aim of desirability – also addresses a weak spot in Hansen's theory: it does not offer much space for analysing how states seek to pursue positive outcomes. This oversight can be understood when one considers that Hansen's case studies tend to be crises involving governments choosing between a bad and a worse option.[63] Indeed, Hansen's foreign policy/identity nexus assumes governments have the rather limited aim of "present[ing] a foreign policy that appears *legitimate and enforceable* to its relevant audience". However, most foreign policies also aim to achieve not just legitimate outcomes, but also to maximise desirable ones.[64] Yes, legitimacy is often a precondition for desirability but ongoing long-term policies are usually already in some way enforceable and moreover can therefore be assumed to have had sufficient legitimacy to have been enacted in the past. In these cases, the legitimacy of maintaining these long-term policies rests on how governments represent the desirability of the policy. Indeed, the main argument for making this distinction is to allow the foreign policy constellation to better capture the majority of international relations between states that involve foreign policy practices characterised by rivalry rather than conflict. In these instances states pursue foreign policy that aims to maximise desirable outcomes not just walk an unstable tightrope between legitimate and enforceable ones. I suggest that Hansen's model can incorporate desirability in at least two ways: 1) in a focus on how the policy permits the state to perform a privileged identity, and 2) by paying closer attention to how the effects of the foreign policy in the present and past are represented as positive, and consonant with, representations of the state's identity. However, to better

[63] For example Hansen has written at length on Bosnian War (Hansen, 2006), the Danish cartoon controversy (Hansen, 2011a, 2011b), rape in war and gendered security problems, and has co-authored a history of security studies (Buzan & Hansen, 2009), a discipline that until relatively recently concerned itself primarily with war.
[64] This is pretty much the assumption of all economic policies, and arguably realism.

capture how long-term policies are maintained, further additional theorization of Hansen's foreign policy/identity nexus is required.

Developing the Nexus: Representing Policy and Legitimacy

Viewing identity constructions through the ethical, spatial and temporal lenses, and identifying (non-)radical Others, facilitates a theoretically rigorous analysis of instabilities and stabilisation moves in foreign policy discourse. However, although Hansen (2006, p. 32) writes that "discourses engage and contest each other by challenging *policy*, identity and the *logic* through which they are linked" [my emphasis], the bulk of her theorizing concerns collective identity: positive linking, differentiation, ethical, spatial, and temporal identity representations.[65] Although Hansen illustrates in her cases how representations of policy matters, and *how logic(s) of legitimacy*[66] can change when laying out the theory behind policy identity constellation, policy and logic take the back seat. The following section will address this weakness, and theorize the role that logics and representation of policy can play in destabilising or stabilising the nexus. However, I should be clear: I am not seeking to separate, nor privilege representations of policy over identity; rather, I am theorizing in more depth how the mutual constitution of identity and policy can be analysed.

First, it is important to note that Hansen does theorize to a limited degree how representation of a policy can play a crucial role in (de)stabilising an identity/foreign policy constellation. For example, she suggests some ways in which policy representation stabilizes a foreign policy discourse, recommending analysts pay attention to: "how facts are brought together to constitute events" (Hansen 2006, p. 32). Moreover, her emphasis that these "facts" do not have any meaning unless mobilized and inserted into the discourse around particular narratives, again touches the issue. However, unlike in identity construction she does not offer a theoretically informed lens to analyse these policy representations, and their effect on the bandwidth of policy possibilities. Indeed, Hansen offers examples, but little theory. She notes how whether the Serbs' policy was represented as a massacre or genocide affected the ethical identity implied in particular foreign policy discourses (Ibid, p.33). She also uses the example of how George Bush stabilised the Iraq war discourse by reformulating the goal of the policy to "liberating the Iraqi people" (Ibid). In both examples, intended to show how facts are inserted,

[65] And a number of other methodological issues related to post-structural discourse analyses not addressed directly here.

[66] While accepting that logic of legitimacy is closely related to ethical identity constructions, I hold that an additional category of logic of legitimacy can provide enough marginal utility to make it a fruitful lens of analysis to develop.

interpreted, and dealt with in the government discourse, refined abstraction on policy representations, like that Hansen offers for identity construction, is noticeably absent.

Indeed, Hansen's account of how actors mobilize facts to constitute "events" is further indication of a temporal and political bias towards short-term crises and wars. When the policy is long-term, particularly of a none-urgent routinized sort, it is rarely presented to the public in terms of "events". Rather, aid, trade, and nuclear weapons get represented in terms of cumulative costs, benefits, and reported effects across time beyond what Hansen implies with "events". Furthermore, the focus on "facts" and "events" also privileges representations that draw from the real world. Policies can generate legitimacy from heavily abstracted discourses – economics, deterrence (key for this thesis), religious texts – that are not constituted through representations of "events" and "facts". Again, Hansen captures this somewhat in her conception of ethical identity, but that only captures responsibility to act, not necessarily the legitimacy through desirability.

Representing Policies: Nukespeak

To theorize how to analyse long term policies, I will draw from Lakoff's account of how metaphors' structure thought, and also from *nukespeak*, which suggests the language used to describe nuclear policies facilitates their acceptance as a legitimate policy. While nukespeak theorists also conduct[ed] systematic discourse analysis of texts, its theory cannot just be inserted into post-structuralist analysis without ontological remodelling. Totten's (1984, p. 42) definition of nukespeak illustrates its ontological incompatibility with post-structuralist assumptions about the social world: "[Nukespeak] consist[s] primarily of euphemisms, jargon, and bizarre acronyms which serve to cloud the true nature of nuclear weapon systems, nuclear fighting concepts and nuclear war itself." The problem phrase is *cloud the true nature*; a post-structuralist ontology requires that no extra-discursive realm exists waiting to be uncovered or revealed (Foucault, 2012). Rather, as the above sections discussed, post-structuralism holds that language produces the objects it names. What Totten wants is government discourse that represents nuclear weapons differently; probably one that describes their destructive power in more vivid language. Taking post-structuralist ontology disbars accepting that how Totten would represent nuclear weapons is any truer than nukespeak. However, if one gives up nukespeak's goal of revealing some hidden reality, it does theorize discursive strategies for how *representations* of policy can help reconcile that policy with the constructions of identity found in the nexus. We can also analyse how those representations of policy marginalise alternative representations (like those Totten might prefer), and also (de)legitimise a particular policy.

Nukespeak identifies "discursive strategies" for facilitating the maintenance of nuclear weapons. In the most-cited nukespeak article Schiappa (1989) identifies two nukespeak strategies - *bureaucratization* and *domestication* – which could prove useful for understanding how a state seeks to stabilise its foreign policy identity constellation. *Bureaucratization*, according to Schiappa (1989, p. 253), is a "rhetorical strategy by which nuclear concepts are insulated from public inspection by acronyms or sanitized jargon". One example could be how the British nuclear weapons policy of "continuous at sea deterrence" (CASD) clouds and sanitizes the public's understanding of the UK's long-term practice of having a nuclear armed submarine on patrol 24/7, capable of hitting any country in the world with up to 192 nuclear warheads. Meanwhile, *domestication* involves "naming by metaphorically extending ordinary language" which "embodies the common sense of a community of language users" which "includes the judgements, attitudes and feelings associated with certain words" (Schiappa, 1989, p. 255). This, Schiappa argues "normalizes extraordinary technology" (Ibid). One good example from Western nuclear discourse is the representation of NATO's "nuclear umbrella" which draws upon the safe, normal, prudent habit of using a plastic device to keep the rain off. Nuclearists would argue that the normality and prudence of using an umbrella hides how it involves the maintenance of thousands of nuclear weapons trained upon one's reported enemies. These discursive strategies saturate nuclear discourse, but they also have wider applicability and can be used to help develop Hansen's foreign policy/identity nexus.

Indeed, the tendencies the nukespeakers identified are hardly unique to nuclear weapons; Abstraction and jargon is a feature of most government policy. In the UK, policy experts are frequently referred to as "policy wonks": a derogatory term for one who speaks in technocratic language of their specialised field and generally considered to be detached from real life. Accusations that governments' abstract policy representations hide "true" implications are commonplace. Michele Chwastiak (2001, 2006; 2008) has repeatedly argued that the ostensibly neutral accounting practices of cost benefit analysis, planning and budgeting turns war into a mundane resource allocation problem, framing it as rational and ultimately "normalizing war". Meanwhile in the UK, New Labour used to promote "labour flexibility "employment policy, an abstraction from economics, critics claimed hid how it involves removing laws protecting worker's rights (Cole, 1998). Domesticizing strategies are also common outside of nuclear weapons: the most powerful non-nuclear weapon the US possesses is called "The Daisy Cutter", while the US is rarely reported as killing enemies but "neutralizing" (war as science) or "taking out" (war as sport metaphor). These are examples of how Lakoff (1991; Lakoff & Johnson, 2003) suggests metaphors can structure our thoughts and emphasise some qualities of an object or actions while hiding others. In these examples, "war as science" implies rationality, while sport

metaphors grant a war the fairness of the sports game, de-politicising the "contest" (Shapiro, 1989) and implicitly constituting citizens as supporters. While Lakoff and Johnson show how metaphors are so embedded into our language we cannot avoid them, the analyst can investigate how they relate and reinforce representations of identity. Lakoff (1991) focuses on metaphors in general, not the relationship between policy and identity, but his example of how the war as violent crime metaphor used by the West to describe Saddam Hussain's policies, show how this metaphor also constitutes his identity as the radical other as well:

> The Iraqi invasion of Kuwait is reported on in terms of murder, theft and rape. The planned American invasion was never discussed in terms of murder, assault, and arson. Moreover, the US plans for war are seen, in Clausewitzian terms, as rational calculation. But the Iraqi invasion is discussed not as a rational move by Saddam, but as the work of a madman. (Lakoff, 1991, p.28)

Tying this back to the foreign policy nexus, these strategies can be considered as opposites; while bureaucratization draws from discourse the public are unfamiliar with to produce ambiguous meaning, domestication involves the drawing from familiar discourses to attach an easily understandable meaning to a (social or material) object. However, nukespeak only focuses on governments presenting their own nuclear weapons, if one flips nukespeak, we can theorize the discursive strategies of the anti-war and anti-nuclearists. While bureaucratization strategies represent potentially negative actions in the abstract, opponents often present vivid detailed accounts to destabilise a given policy representation. Indeed, if government's have a tendency to talk about their wars in terms of "targets hit," perhaps visualising them on a screen as blobs changing colour, oppositional discourses might seek out graphic images of buildings destroyed and people killed, and provide detailed accounts of destruction with human narratives (Hogan & Mehltretter, 2009). For example the quote from Lakoff above, suggests that the US government reinforced the Saddam Hussein's radical-Other identity by representing his policy of war using the language of violent crime. Similarly, *domestication* can be flipped too; instead of drawing on metaphors utilising the familiar, normal and comforting, one can draw on representations that emphasise the criminal, the abnormal, and the dangerous.[67]

The above suggests two fruitful paths for analysing policy representations and how they co-constitute identity. First, analysts should look out for how governments produce representations of policy that draw from abstract technocratic discourses – jargon, models, abstraction – and how they produce a distance from the object or action constituted that can insulate a positive identity construction from any negative meanings of alternative

[67] Actually by flipping domestication and bureaucratization you get to a place that would resemble a securitization move.

representations of a given action or object. This and the inverse: looking out for how details, graphic images, humanizing policy effects can reinforce or undermine identity constructions.[68] Second, analysts should also be sensitive to policy representations that draw upon the positive (or negative) meanings from normal discourses that may marginalize or hide the negative (or positive) meanings rival discourses seek to attach to the object or action. Again, with view to how they relate to identity constructions.

A Blank Logic of Legitimacy

Hansen provides examples of different logics of legitimacy governments may mobilize to justify foreign policy (in)action, and implies flexibility. However, in the absence of a fluid definition her framework, Hansen encourages focus on security logics. Indeed, Hansen's description of security logic of legitimacy can account very well for crisis and wars. She draws heavily from securitization theory that suggests how the articulation of "threats," demanding urgent responses, can be used to legitimise governments breaking the normal rules of politics (Buzan et al., 1998). Meanwhile, she shows how articulation of "the national interest" offers a legitimizing logic for non-urgent non-controversial policies. Hansen's theorization of ethical identity (see above) permits analysis of legitimizing logics that imply ethical responsibility for undertaking foreign policy beyond security and/or the national interests. However, these categorizations leave gaps for how states following non-urgent, but potentially controversial policies (for example ongoing arms sales, or nuclear weapon maintenance), can buttress the legitimacy of a policy through logics beyond security or ethical responsibility, or articulation of the national interest. But fundamentally, regardless of concrete examples, the categories Hansen suggests remain unnecessarily restrictive.

Hansen and the securitization school's account of security discourse is somewhat essentialist, a more flexible post-structuralist definition of the logic of legitimacy[69] would permit a more nuanced investigation into how states legitimise their foreign policies. As Max Weber (1978, p. 213) suggests, what constitutes legitimacy for an actor depends upon the "belief" or shared inter-subjective understanding of the audience, which governments "attempt to establish and to cultivate". As this implies, what constitutes legitimacy can and does change. For example, as Hedley Bull (2002, p. 35 [1977]) notes: "After the American and French Revolution the prevailing principle of international legitimacy ceased to be dynastic and became national or popular: […] it came to be generally held that questions of this sort should be settled not by

[68] Note: it would be perfectly possible to have discourse in which violence and death would be considered positive and legitimate, for example in prisons, or in criminal networks.
[69] As opposed to one seeking to normatively set in stone in the abstract what constitutes legitimacy for a government.

reference to rights of rulers but by reference to the rights of the national or to the people." However, Logics of legitimacy need not always contest one another: the development/security nexus policy agenda illustrates, for example, how multiple logics can be mobilised to support policy. Here, the logics of security in countering a radical Other and the ethical responsibility to help the underdeveloped "Other" are represented to coincide and reinforce the legitimacy of an interventionist foreign policy.[70] This thesis therefore posits a dynamic and flexible *Weberian* definition of legitimacy that is sensitive to the emergence, cessation, or cultivation of multiple, potentially overlapping logics of legitimacy:

Whatever justification(s) a state uses to legitimise its policy that generates sufficient (tacit or active) consent from a given audience to enforce the policy. In short: *Whatever works*.

Certainly, this captures both the security logic of the Copenhagen School: X threatens our security, we must act and can legitimately ignore the normal rules of politics; and the mobilisation of the national interest, "we shall do this because it benefits us, and doing things that benefit us is the legitimate past-time of states". However, it also allows analysis of how governments may articulate a national interest – we do this because it is desirable - *and* legitimize it through additional mobilization of reasons X, Y and Z. A legitimizing logic for arms dealing (controversial, but non-urgent practice), could begin with national interest and be supplemented by logics of legitimacy relating to tradition, international law, international norms, or even technically because the buying state is the colour blue on the map. However, while the potential logics available are technically infinite, actors have performative limits on logics of legitimacy: those that (could be expected to) be understood by the audience. Indeed, for a legitimizing-logic to prove successful, it must carry sufficient resonance to enable a government to enforce its policy without opposition successfully challenging it.[71] Hansen does provide an example of the flexibility of logic of legitimacy in *Security as Practice* (see Iraq example cited above). However, Hansen does not explicitly theorize how logics of legitimacy can supplement one another or change according to circumstances to help stabilise the foreign policy identity constellation. Thus, this thesis' theorization through defining legitimacy does not challenge Hansen's conception of the Foreign Policy/Identity Nexus; rather it submits a productive clarification.

[70] This is necessarily a reductionist take on the security/development nexus; for a more detailed discussion of this expanding foreign policy agenda see Hettne, 2010, and Stern and Ojendal, 2010.
[71] Obviously, this will vary massively from country to country depending on the system of government and scope for opposition to challenge policies.

Towards the Analysis: Method

So far I have discussed the post-structuralist conception of discourse and why it matters and have developed Lene Hansen's Foreign Policy/Identity Nexus to better capture long-term foreign policies. I will now explain, justify, and critique my method: what I did, why I did it, and how these choices affect the epistemological basis of my conclusions.[72] Taking Jackson's pluralist definition that research should be defined as the "systematic production of empirical factual knowledge about political social arrangements", I will now lay out that system and the terms by which it should be judged by (2010, p. 22). Post-structural discourse analysis does not share the same tests of validity as positivist methods. Rather, my Hansen-inspired analysis best fits what Jackson calls "analyticism" in which an ideal type (In this case, the Foreign Policy/Identity Nexus) provides the framework for producing an explicitly non-representational case-specific narrative (Ibid, p.152). Instead of seeking generalizable or falsifiable hypotheses, the claims made should be judged by its "pragmatic consequences for ordering the facts of the world": whether they reveal useful insights into the puzzle under investigation (Ibid, p. 115).

Usefulness however, depends on having applied the framework proficiently and convincing the reader so. As Dunne suggests, the "goal as a researcher[is] to provide an argument about why my interpretation is valid, so that I can convince others that mine is one of the best interpretations out there." (2008, p. 92) How to convince requires the both the internal logic and coherence of my arguments together with intersubjective perception of their usefulness, but also, faith in the proficiency of the process that led to them.[73] The rest of my thesis accounts for the internal validity therefore the following section discusses my selection of texts, method of reading, and the process of mapping of the discourse, before anticipating, countering but also creating a space for criticism.[74]

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[72] I have chosen to eschew methods chapter convention and will not hide myself through use of the passive voice because the process of discourse analysis depends so heavily on the researchers themselves this would feel disingenuous. Comparing a couple of imaginary sentences describing a method illustrates why the convention can be justified in natural science but not in discourse analysis: "The representations were selected on the basis of their significance in the discourse" differs fundamentally from "1ml of solution X was mixed with 50ml of iodine". In the latter the identity of the researcher is irrelevant and the case for leaving them out makes sense; one thousand researchers following the procedure would produce the same results. In contrast, selecting suitable texts, noting key representations and positions has a much greater margin for difference. As I suggested in this thesis' preface, the researcher constitutes an unavoidable variable affecting the analysis and conclusions.

[73] Does my analysis make sense – do the representations and regularities I write about mean what I think they mean, do they support the conclusions I draw etc.

[74] However, I am absolutely not going to add my two cents worth to ongoing debate about what science *really* is – and risk as, Jackson might suggest, becoming a very poor man's philosopher of science - other than to say I am pluralist.

Research Design

Because my thesis investigates UK governments' agency in producing a discourse that enabled the maintenance of their nuclear weapons programme, I privileged official foreign policy performances. In doing this I was following Hansen's Research Design Model 1, which investigates the discourse of "political leaders with official authority to sanction the foreign policies pursued as well as those with central roles in executing these policies, for instance high-ranked military staff [and] senior civil servants (including diplomats and mediators)" (Hansen, 2006, p.60). The advantage of this model is that the relationship between discourse and the practice of maintaining nuclear weapons is a close one. Failing to produce a stable official discourse legitimizing the UK's maintenance of nuclear weapons would likely, though not inevitably, pave the way for successful challenges from opposition and potentially changes in the practice. Moreover, government officials have an institutionalised authoritative subject position to "speak foreign policy" and produce subjects, objects, and propose solutions that must be taken with a degree of seriousness not afforded to the other domestic actors who might be presumed to be lacking the requisite knowledge or expertise. Leira (2011) backs up this justification empirically in a genealogical investigation in which he argues the domain of foreign policy has been constituted by the exclusion of civil society and the free press from the discussion.

This does not imply excluding opposition from analysis, only that it justifies privileging official foreign policy performances in light of my objective of investigating the official policy of nuclear weapons maintenance. As Leira (2011) also notes, there is often tension in the exclusionary practices of foreign policy: the press and opposition often push back against the boundaries imposed, and thus the government foreign policy discourse is never a perfect regime of truth in which each representation is automatically accepted and naturalized. My case provides an excellent example; despite Thatcher's government's initial protestations that they were following tradition when they set about acquiring Trident without following parliamentary procedure, they had to defend their position from almost a decade of attacks from Labour. Indeed, while governments typically have constructed advantages in terms of the *ethos* of its foreign policy representations, it can be challenged, for example, by the viral *logos* of pop culture such as *Dr Strangelove*, or the immediate visceral combination of *pathos* and *ethos* of a photograph such as that of Phan Thi Kim Phuc. Moreover, a governments' *ethos* regarding foreign policy representations may fluctuate.[75] Consequently, in my analysis, while I privilege

[75] For example, the "sexed up" dossier Tony Blair used in the build-up to the UK's involvement with the war in Iraq; it may have helped to legitimise the immediate decision to go to war, but it diminished the long-term credibility of UK governments proclamations on foreign policy

the official discourse (and in particular speeches by prime ministers, foreign secretaries, and defence ministers and well cited White Papers),[76] I also read and cited Parliamentary debates, opposition texts, and *The Times* newspaper, to show what representations were contested and how the discourse marginalized them, and also to provide a sense of how dispersed the governments' representations were within the UK public sphere.

Selection of Texts & Reading

"Read everything, study everything" was Foucault's daunting advice to the prospective discourse analysts; however, rather like the bible, one should not take this too literally. In practice, all research must set parameters. Rather, the principle Foucault's disciples take from this involves reading until you exhaust meaning. As Leira (2011) suggests "reading until there is no additional meaning to be found can be seen as a strong indicator of the internal validity of the research". What this entailed for my various chapters was quite different for Chapter 4 – on international discourse around nuclear weapons in general - than for Chapter 5 and 6 on British Foreign Policy discourse.

My method for the former involved reading extensively the international nuclear weapons literature from across all genres following the intertextual links provided in a manner analogous to an inter-textual snowball: anti-nuclear and nuclear texts always make reference to other texts (whether formalized in a bibliography or not) and so I by following the links I picked up more and more representations. Although, I would always come across new *ways* of representing positions, I eventually reached and went beyond the point at which Neumann (2008, p. 69) suggests the researcher can stop: new texts ceased to offer new positions that could not subsumed under my categorization system (inductively generated through the process of reading in the case of Chapter 4). Although international literature on nuclear weapons appears dauntingly vast, it is relatively static; the anti-nuclearist and nuclearist discourses lack dynamic physical events to represent and many of their areas of contestation exist in abstract spaces that do not change much with time (elaborated in Chapter 4). Indeed, in the literature surrounding nuclear weapons Neumann's assertion that: "relatively few texts will constitute the main points of reference" (2008, p. 70) was certainly true, even if it required reading a great deal more to confirm it. A more serious issue than missing key representations is that the reader will find fault with my categorizing and construction of the discursive formations themselves, although evaluating Chapter 4's internal logic would prove the best test of this.

[76] Reading widely and noting which texts are cited widely, together with the assumption that major speeches by major ministers will be widely read, provides an idea of what constitutes "key texts" or "monuments" in the discourse.

The reading for Chapters 5 and 6 required a more systematic approach. First, reading extensively around the decisions in question I delimited the periods under investigation to 1979-1987 and the period 2005-2009. These two periods were selected because they constituted the periods through which the governments performed a foreign policy that justified their respective decisions to acquire new nuclear weapons systems (Trident I and Trident II). Although the UK physically "maintained" its nuclear weapons in the 15 years before 1979 and the period between 1987 and 2005, the issue rarely featured in parliament or the mainstream news. I decided therefore that the period in between would be best covered with a more conventional description of the changes in the external environment fostered by the Cold War, and the changes in the domestic political situation, rather than a full-blown discourse analysis. A more difficult self-imposed limitation was to start my discourse analysis at 1979 rather than begin earlier at the decision to acquire Polaris in the 1960s or the decision to go nuclear in 1948. Unfortunately, although this would improve the genealogical aspect of my investigation, pragmatism triumphed: time, space and the convention of keeping a thesis to within 200 pages forced my hand. Although I could have investigated the two earlier periods, I decided that covering two periods that sat either side of the end of the Cold War, and the changes it prompted in international and British nuclear weapons discourse justifies this selection.

Chapter 5 analyses the government's foreign policy discourse from 1979 until 1987 when the election victory of the Conservatives ended hopes of reversing the decision before the bulk of the money was spent. During this period Nuclear weapons and the Trident decision featured heavily in the mainstream public debate. Thus, the texts include a wide variety of speeches to a wide variety of domestic audiences over the period 1979-1987: Every parliamentary debate in which nuclear weapons, or Trident were mentioned; every speech given by Thatcher that mentioned "Trident" and/or "Nuclear weapons"; every parliament debate that mentioned Trident or nuclear weapons, and all publicly available nuclear policy papers. Finally, I also searched *The Times* archives for the period 1979 and 1985 for all articles that mentioned "Trident" and/or "nuclear weapons".

The primary data that covers the New Labour's nuclear weapons policy is both sparser yet more precise. While Thatcher's nuclear policy regularly featured in almost all foreign policy debates, in election speeches, and generally permeated the mainstream political discourse, Labour's nuclear policy was pursued vigorously but largely at the margins of mainstream policy discourse. When it did enter the mainstream public sphere it did so only for a short period. The

result is that the UK performed a specific nuclear weapons policy that could be analytically differentiated from the wider foreign policy (Thatcher's nuclear weapons policy was so central to her general foreign policy that it tends to fuse together). The primary data of the discourse analysis of the Labour nuclear weapons policy consists of the following texts between 2006 and 2010: 1) The specifically nuclear policy papers that the government released in relation to the Trident renewal, 2) All the times in which "nuclear weapons" or "Trident" were mentioned in Commons and in *The Times* and 3) The nuclear policy speeches members of the government made about to various international and national organisations.

Unlike Chapter 4's construction of the international nuclear weapons discourses, I mapped the representations of the UK's foreign policy discourse using Hansen's analytical framework. Mapping the spatial, ethical, and temporal lenses of the various constructions of the Self/Other provided a wealth of material, and significant patterns emerged. Similarly, the grammar of *Securitization* was obvious in Thatcher's nuclear discourse. However, it quickly became apparent that the representations of policy itself were significant, and that in the 21st century discourse the logic of legitimacy found could not be accounted for by securitization or security logics alone. While Hansen's framework could accommodate these facets of the discourse, it offered little by way of theory to analyse it. Thus, I went back to Hansen's ideal type and modified the framework to allow it to capture the British nuclear weapons policy, but also other long -term foreign policies (see the previous section).

Caveats

I would like to acknowledge some potential weaknesses in these procedures and attempt to respond to them, namely: missing texts and misreading. While my search method relies on the accuracy of how the various archives have been coded, I hold that given the nature of this macro rather than micro study, and the consistency of patterns I noted, omissions up to a wide margin of error would not significantly harm my analysis. It appears highly unlikely that Thatcher might have given a speech that directly contradicted her other speeches, that would not have been captured in either a) some of the other newspaper articles written at the time, b) the secondary literature I have read on Thatcher's nuclear policy, or c) the opposition attacks on Thatcher's policy covered in the commons debates I have analysed. Meanwhile, I would argue the chances of missing a text that would dramatically alter my analysis of the Labour government's discourse are also slim given their specificity, limited nature, and the governments well known adeptness at public relations and keeping everyone "on message,".

However, as Neumann (2008) suggests, pulling off a good discourse analysis relies heavily on

the researcher's abilities. Therefore, what is probably a much bigger problem than the chances of missing texts is the possibility that I have miss-read the texts, miss important representations and patterns, and generally conduct a less than rigorous discourse analysis. Hopefully, my thesis will demonstrate that I have avoided this, but then my text, like any other, is susceptible to infinite different inter-subjective readings. I can only hope to produce a discourse analysis of British nuclear weapons policy that readers will find insightful, original and useful; it would be hubristic, and self-defeating given my ontology, to claim that it is definitive.

Constructing the UK's Nuclear Regime of Truth

Moving from mapping patterns, continuities and changes to constructing an "analytical narrative" is a big step, one too often hidden. Validity is tricky to establish but being transparent about one's procedure helps. Firstly, it is worth clarifying a common misconception regarding discourses: they are not intended "to capture the whole of actuality, but instead to help us bring some analytical order to our experiences" and illuminate relations of the social world that would otherwise remain obscured by pure description (Jackson 2011, p 154). In practice this means not detailing every nuance of a discourse, or perhaps more sinisterly, *silencing* what I have deemed incidental to answering of the research question. Therefore, I should disclose my method for deciding what (not) to include and why in order to facilitate critique. The main criteria involved asking the counter-factual question: Was X pattern or representation critical for the UK's nuclear maintenance? For example, in my construction of the UK's nuclear discourses I have largely ignored the position of many in the military and the Social Democratic Party (SDP) who desired a cheaper alternative. I did this because my research question focuses on how the UK maintained nuclear weapons, not on what type of weapon.[77] Elsewhere, although I was immediately drawn to the representations of the costs of Trident and they featured with a high frequency in the newspapers and attacks, from the opposition during the 1980s, I have not given them proportional space in my construction of the Thatcher's nuclear foreign policy discourse. Although costs helped foreground the nuclear weapons issue, I would argue that the government's discourse rested on persuading the UK that possessing nuclear weapons was a matter of life and death, thus marginalizing the question of costs.[78] How the Thatcher government produced a foreign policy discourse that coherently and compellingly represented a world in which the UK security rested on nuclear deterrence is vital for answering the

[77] Similarly the controversy surrounding the placement of US Pershing missiles helped constitute a nuclear weapons problem to be addressed in British politics, but it is difficult to imagine how the outcome of this contestation could have seriously affected the UK's maintenance of its own nuclear weapons.

[78] As I write in Chapter 5, governments accepted that the costs were unfortunate, but when the question is "your money or your life" you don't quibble over the price. Indeed, Labour's attacks on the cost of Trident are something of red herring: Labour represented Trident and nuclear weapons in general as not just expensive but dangerous, for these critics, just £1 spent on nuclear weapons would have been too much.

research question both in the 1980s and the 21st century. This is certainly not an exhaustive list of what I left out; but, it should provide a useful window into my exclusionary practices that might pre-emptively tackle criticism, but also open the door for constructive criticism.

I should also justify the validity of my exemplars in the construction of my analytical narrative. Firstly, the privileging of official discourse and in particular speeches by leading ministers and key government papers means that we can immediately assume a degree of dispersion in the press (and indeed I have tried to illustrate this in the footnotes). Secondly, though perhaps more importantly, I did not select these representations because they were very different from other representations; quite the opposite: they were selected precisely because they were good examples of *regularities* in the discourse. In all cases in which I use a quote to illustrate a representation, several others could have been found; the question was which could illuminate the best using the fewest words. Third, though each enunciation statement is necessarily temporally unique and the discourse it constitutes unstable to some degree, in both periods the governments' discourses displayed a marked consistency in the representations that made up their position.[79] Indeed, while I initially intended to map the fluctuating character of the respective government discourses chronologically as they dealt with challenges, the regularities of representations displayed within each period meant it made more sense to treat and present each period's regime of truth as a discrete moment and concentrate on the continuity and change between these two episodes (both government's effectively "stuck to their guns").[80]

Why Discourse Analysis

Given discourse analysis of this sort precludes epistemological certainties a sceptic might ask: *Why discourse analysis*? The answer lies in the object of analysis and specifically in the unusual qualities of the nuclear problem most famously noted by Derrida (1984):

> [Nuclear weaponry is] a phenomenon whose essential feature is that of being fabulously textual, through and through. Nuclear weaponry depends, more than any weaponry in the past, it seems, upon structures of information and communication, structures of language, including non-vocalizable language, structures of codes and graphic decoding.

[79] Although, post-structuralist hold that every objects meaning is in some way "fluid," analysis would not be possible if we attempted to treat everything as such all the time (Neumann, 2008, p.73). Indeed, as Neumann notes, it is impossible to avoid "reifying" something when analysing something else (2008, p. 73). For example, in this case I treat the UK state as sedimented and stable, even though I concur with post-structuralist research that argues its existence is contingent upon a the continuance of institutionalised discursive and non-discursive practices.

[80] Treating the discourse in this way can certainly be defended as legitimate on post-structuralist grounds; indeed my use of metaphor of a regime deliberately disrupts the notion of temporal progression, as Foucault (1980, p.69) explains a "politico-strategic term is an indication of how the military and administration actually come to inscribe themselves both on a material soil and within forms of discourse. Anyone envisaging the analysis of discourses solely in terms of temporal continuity would inevitably be led to approach and analyse it like the internal transformation of an individual consciousness".

> But the phenomenon is fabulously textual also to the extent that, for the moment, a nuclear war has not taken place: one can only talk and write about it.

While the UK's nuclear weapons circle the seas performing continuous at sea deterrence they do not leave much material imprint for empiricists to dissect. The "effects" of deterrence are textual to an extent unusual in politics: the discourse that has developed around nuclear weapons grants them utility without being "used". The key empirics represented include the hazy period of "nuclear peace" in Europe that nuclear weapons are said to preserve and the risk or benefit they may have provided in the past and may provide in the future (Chapter 4). Yet, the nature of this "peace" is defined by an absence rather than material action, while evaluating future risk involves, at best, educated speculation. Some have asked "why" but this route tends to lead to structural determinism or seeking to reach inside the minds of decision makers (see Chapter 3) Therefore, what constitutes objects of analysis for nuclear weapons is a host of subjectivities resistant to conventional analysis. In contrast, how subjectivities become naturalized: how one version of inter-subjective "truth" is imposed over another through discursive performances constitutes the central problem for post-structuralism.

Therefore, post-structuralist discourse analysis provides the tools to analyse what we *do* have: the talking and the texts, and specifically how representations within the UK's foreign policy discourse gained predominance over others forming the pre-conditions for its nuclear weapons maintenance. Instead of speculating why the UK has nuclear weapons, what these weapons have or have not done, and whether they should have them we can ask questions grounded in empirics: How have governments and other actors produced, maintained and modified their discourses – representing the Others of the world, the Self, and its nuclear weapons – to enable the UK's nuclear weapons appear legitimate and desirable. Other approaches which preclude taking language as ontologically relevant immediately disbar themselves from the all these discursive empirics.

Chapter 3

Literature Review: Unsettling Explanations of British Nuclear Policy

To engage in debate, as has so often been done before, on whether the British nuclear force has been maintained for reasons of status or security is sterile and fruitless.

- Andrew Pierre, 1972

The bulk of the literature on British nuclear weapons comes from the conventional security field. These scholars take a philosophical ontology that implicitly takes for granted the researchers ability to "hook up" (Jackson, 2011, p. 30) to a mind-independent world and analyse reality for what it really is.[81] These scholars understand language as reflective, and unproblematic, and certainly do not seek to problematize it. In contrast, this thesis conceptualises humans' system of making the social world intelligible as discourse (Chapter 2). This chapter therefore offers a bridge to conventional scholars to understanding what discourse analysis can offer to the conventional security studies issue of nuclear weapons by juxtaposing my problematization within the literature. While discourse analysis "has become part of the accepted canon of approaches when analysing international politics"(Diez, 2001, p. 5), it remains at the margins of British nuclear weapons literature, and arguably Security Studies in general (The gist of Buzan & Hansen 2007, even if they suggest it is changing).[82]

Indeed, while scholars frequently call for plurality and mutual recognition in research (Jackson, 2011; Klotz & Prakash, 2008; Moses & Knutsen, 2012) both conventional scholars and post-positivists are guilty of not making enough effort to engage in an earnest constructive

[81] For example, British Security Scholar Colin Gray (2001, p. 231) writes: "The evidence behind this discussion and its conclusions comprises British nuclear-weapon capabilities, authoritative recent declarations, patterns in behaviour, and scientifically derived poll data on public opinion conducted over many years. Contemporary British capabilities, declarations, and deeds all tell the same story. What follows is verified empirically; it is not an essay of opinion"

[82] Ritchie (2010) represents the first tentative "mainstream" step: published in *International Security*, it cites Foucault, talks about identity. However as this chapter will later illustrate, the progress it represents is useful but limited.

dialogue[83]. Post-structuralists typically locate blame with the mainstream scholarship and their habit bandying about the commonplace "science" as a stick to discipline alternative approaches (Campbell, 1998: epilogue; Hansen, 2006, pp. 4–6; Jackson, 2011, chapter 1). However, post-structuralists must accept some culpability too. For instance, David Campbell (1998, p.223) in Writing Security bemoans positivists' lack of serious attempts to engage, before using a metaphor of the post structuralists driving into the future in a sportster leaving the mainstream in their wake waving their papers.[84] As exciting as that might sound, it is also telling of the poststructuralist's habit of writing for one another, rather than the world. Moreover, given, that most post-structuralists usually claim to want to make some sort of "interpretive intervention" (Ibid, p. 221), or "interruption" (C. Weber, 2010), this lack of effort to engage (or make themselves intelligible) seems self-defeating. Therefore, this literature review intends to slow down and offer conventional scholars a lift: to show – in plain language - how and why discourse analysis can offer insight into nuclear weapons.[85]

The opening section evaluates the various explanations offered by the literature for why the UK has nuclear weapons. It will be structured by Sagan's famous pro-to theory that suggests three explanations (all found in the literature surrounding UK nuclear weapon policy) for why states want nuclear weapons, namely: a) security; b) status; and, c) domestic political interests, before adding another, also found in the UK literature: d) identity explanations. Treating the debate in this way will show both the breadth of the conventional British nuclear research, and in so doing illuminate the largely untrammelled space this thesis explores. By illuminating the limitations of these explanations[86], this chapter seeks show how a post structuralist approach can augment their analysis by asking questions the conventional analysts are not equipped, nor inclined to answer: how nuclear weapons states maintain their nuclear weapons. The latter section of the chapter reviews the post-positivist nuclear weapons literature that provides some helpful foundations and insights for this thesis' problematization. Sadly, I do not have the space

[83] See Jackson (2011) on how IR scholars have long used the rhetorical commonplace of "science" to discipline alternative approaches to their own.
[84] IR would not be any better off were post-structuralism hegemonic.
[85] The exact Campbell quote is: "Where once we were all caught in the headlights of the large North American car of international relations theory, now the continental sportster of critical theories has long since left behind the border guards and toll collectors of the mainstream - who can be served in the rear view mirror waving their arms wildly still demanding paper and the price of admission as occupants go on their way in search of another political problem to explore"
[86] However it must be recognised that the four sections this structure leads to, divided according to security, prestige, identity and domestic political explanations, represent analytical constructs rather than empirically accurate delineations of the debate. Few of the texts suggest that their explanation is final or perfectly distinct from the others. In fact, some do not pose the question but have to be dissected from more teleological historical accounts or security policy texts.

to analyse the nuclear policy debate: those security argumentative papers that argue the rights and wrongs, problems and prospects of British nuclear policy[87].

Competing Explanations: Security, Status, Domestic Politics & Identity

To most realists, British nuclear weapons policy is not much of a puzzle. Nuclear weapons are considered so inherently desirable in an anarchic world demanding *self-help* that realists typically take for granted that once acquired no "rational" state would give them up (see chapter 4). Moreover, if one considers the UK's public policy pronouncements as window dressing and its international institutions as cobwebs, as realists tend to, then the UK's nuclear policy perfectly fits their model of expected behaviour given their material circumstances. Equally, although realists acknowledge that domestic interests and low politicking of bureaucracies affect nuclear issues, they expect marginal influence but only to the extent of scale and size of weapons (Sagan, 1996, p. 65). Again, one can easily read British domestic nuclear squabbling in such a manner.[88]

Rather than puzzling about nuclear maintenance or disarmament, Realists pursue variations on the nuclear puzzle "Why do Non-nuclear weapons states exist?" (Hymans, 2006a, 2006b) Consequently, their research agenda in nuclear matters tends to focus on explaining the "puzzle" of why the number of states with capability to go nuclear has grown to exceed 40 states, yet only nine have chosen to weaponize. (Hymans, 2006a, 2006b) Britain barely registers on the Realist theoretical radar; its position in the global nuclear puzzle is a boring corner piece, unworthy of attention. However, as Hyman (2006a), and Tannenwald (1999) note, the realist hypothesis does not match empirics: several states have given up nuclear weapons, while the majority of states capable of acquiring nuclear weapons have refrained, most with little

[87] Some notable texts: Booth (1999a, 1999b) argues that the UK's nuclear weapons policy is incompatible with human rights; Ritchie (2008) who argues that the UK renewing its nuclear weapons can only undermine the NPT; Rogers (2006) which argues that the renewing the UK's nuclear weapons ties the UK unhelpfully close to the US's global interventionist agenda; Ritchie (2011) which draws on critical security studies to suggest that the UK's nuclear weapons policy is symptomatic of the UK's outdated statist security priorities; Ritchie (2009a, 2009b) and Beach (2009) which argue that the UK's 21st century rationale for Trident laid out in the White Paper does not make sense in the post-cold war era; MccGwire (1986a, 1986b, 2001, 2002) , who argues that the UK's nuclear weapons do not make the UK safer, but perpetuate animosity in international relations; MccGwire (2005) which argues that unilateral disarmament offers an obvious opportunity for the UK to improve its standing in the world; the various anti-nuclear movement texts arguing that UK nuclear weapons are an immoral waste of money; The security texts puzzling about what sort of nuclear force the UK should possess (See for example, (Clarke, 2004; Ritchie & Ingram, 2010; Willett, 2010).

[88] See Freedman (1980) for a detailed account of the low political dilemmas the UK faced in maintaining its nuclear weapons

coercion.[89] Thus we can begin to see why puzzling how the UK maintains a discourse that represents their nuclear weapons are legitimate and desirable warrants investigation.

Security Explanations

Although, the security explanation of the UK's nuclear possession is near hegemonic amongst security academics, occasionally British conventional scholars investigate the motivations of policy makers. Croft and Williams (1991) provide a textbook example of a conventional analysis of British nuclear history.[90] Indeed, they are one of the few to actually seek to answer the question directly "Why have successive British governments maintained and, in fact, modernized the national nuclear forces?", and thus provide an perfect starting point for this literature review which is structured around different answers to that very question.

In order to pose the question, Croft and Williams (1991) need an alternative explanation to counter. Thus they pose the question contra the popular (or populist) assertion that Britain acquired and maintained its nuclear forces for reasons primarily of status. Croft and Williams end up concurring with a classic security reading of British nuclear history. The article illuminates four long standing strategic assumptions of the UK policy makers that very closely mirror assumptions made by realism, even if the authors do not state it. While the authors end up privileging security as the main motivation for the UK's maintenance of nuclear weapons, to the author's credit, they are cagey about drawing strong conclusions. Instead, they suggest that their analysis intends only to demonstrate "the interplay between status and security" and "that it would be a mistake to underestimate the importance of security considerations in British nuclear weapon policy and history" (Williams & Croft, 1990, p. 160). Indeed, there is no shortage of scholars who directly or indirectly argue that security concerns explain the UK's nuclear weapon possession, not to mention obviously, successive British Governments.[91]

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[89] As Tannenwald (1999, p. 434) points out "Most non-nuclear states do not live daily in a nuclear security dilemma. Finally, if deterrence is all that matters, then why have so many states not developed nuclear weapons when they could have done so?" Sweden, Australia and New Zealand are in particular examples of states that made the choice to reject nuclear security. Meanwhile, Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakhstan all gave up nuclear weapons inherited from the Soviet Union – despite notable realists (Mearsheimer, 1992) suggesting they do otherwise – South Africa gave up their "bombs in the basement", and both Brazil and Argentina stepped down the nuclear ladder even once they had mastered the nuclear fuel cycle (the most challenging part of the process involved in making a nuclear weapon).

[90] That is not to say British nuclear weapons policy has not been the source of much attention, but most conventional histories seek to describe chronologically the various factors that led to policy makers making the decisions they did. See for example, Stoddart (2008) documenting with newly de-classified material the internal disagreements over how much was needed to fulfil the "Moscow Criterion" (to deter Russia), the decision making process that led to the Chevaline upgrade (Baylis & Stoddart, 2003).

[91] Around the decision to renew, and the controversy that prompted, a number of security analysts often linked to the MoD have written argumentative papers, not so much explaining why the UK has nuclear weapons, but arguing why they *should* have them.

Baylis and Stoddart (Baylis & Stoddart, 2012; Stoddart & Baylis, 2012) writing more than 20 years later reach similar conclusions about the primacy of security, albeit under the label "conventional constructivism". With their "new" approach they assert solemnly that "[…] the Realist view of the world is a socially constructed "belief" rather than an objective reality" (Baylis & Stoddart, 2012, p. 331). However, the authors do not indicate much construction, and instead end up repeating a familiar history of the UK defence policy makers' apparently fixed assumptions, and how they informed the nuclear policy. Indeed, their lack of new insights makes the article's key point appear a more of semantic move: they suggest that rather than the "material factors" emphasised by realists, the UK's nuclear policy was driven by "ideational factors based on a 'realist' perspective held by Britain's political-military leadership have remained of crucial importance through to the present day." (Stoddart & Baylis, 2012, p. 493)[92] But even this clarification (neo-realists do not deny that policy makers have beliefs, they just suggest that in the name of parsimony we can explain international relations without them)[93] is problematic: the author's do not explain how these ideational realist "beliefs" and "the deterrence mind-set" of the UK's policy elite can be separated from the material history of the UK, or how the institutional practices of the Ministry of Defence may have contributed to this mind-set.[94] Nor can the authors explain why they remained so stable and became "entrenched" without making reference to the various "material factors" of the UK's recent history.[95] Indeed, this problem is familiar in IR in which scholars get trapped in an unhelpful Cartesian material/ideational dichotomy, and ignore how "material facts do not speak for themselves, ideas do not float freely either" (Pouliot, 2010, p. 296). Nevertheless, whether or not one grants primacy to ideas or material factors, several other scholars when investigating the motivations of British nuclear policy makers end up with similar conclusions regarding the primacy of

[92] Thus, the authors go further than Williams and Croft by giving "realism" its name, however that they do fail to explore the link any further.
[93] See Waltz (1979)
[94] Many scholars have suggested a direct the link between realism and practice in the nuclear field. Firstly, the hiring practices of the MoD in the UK seem likely to have influenced the collective nuclear position of the MoD. Booth and Wheeler (1991) complain that the academic hegemony of realism during the Cold War affected the career prospects of security professionals. Elsewhere, Booth recalled "the nuclear debate in the 1980s, the vitriol levelled against those of us [academics] who did not share Whitehall's pro-nuclear norms" (Booth, 1997; 372). If they disliked academics who questioned nuclear weapons, it seems unlikely they would employ people sceptical about nuclear weapons. One anonymous employee of the MoD offers support for this view describing it as "a huge organization, but one which is precisely designed not to challenge the underlying assumptions, to take them as your starting point, the water in which you swim"(Hamwee, Miall, & Elworthy, 1990, pp. 359–360).
[95] For example, the authors suggest how the UK's experience with Nazi bombing and the UK's densely populated island status, constituted "conditioning" of the belief about the need for strong military; however, it is difficult to see how these "material factors" can be separate from the "ideational factors" apparently driving the UK's nuclear policy.

security in the UK nuclear policy maker's motivations (other notable examples: Croft, 1994; Gray, 2001; Hamwee, Miall, & Elworthy, 1990; Stocker, 2007)

However, in the literature the security explanation is not so much investigated as asserted. Frequently, authors attempt only to argue that it is right or prudent (and remains so) to maintain nuclear weapons[96]. For example, Desmond Bowen (2010, p. 9), formerly of the MoD when writing in defence of the UK's decision to begin the renewal of Trident in 2007, sums up the UK's motivations in the simplest terms "The United Kingdom has nuclear weapons because successive governments decided that they enhanced the nation's security". According to Bowen the "uncertainty surrounding the future and proliferation… were the strongest determinants" of the British decision to renew. Freedman (1980, p. 139) also supports the security account. While he is sceptical about the official reasons given for the British nuclear force, he argues that this does mean that all strategic security arguments are "specious", only their articulation "diplomatically awkward". Lawrence suggests that the "most compelling strategic rationale for a British nuclear force [...] resides less in the immediate requirements of British defence than in the uncertainties of the future". Official policy dare not flesh out precisely what the UK is uncertain about, but Freedman cites unofficial pronouncements from MoD and ministers to name doubts about the US's commitment to Europe and the credibility of the nuclear guarantee to NATO (Freedman, 1980, pp. 136–139).

The Hollowness of Security Explanations

As convincing as security explanations initially appear, they suffer from a rather timeless problem: attempting to get into the mind of decision makers.[97] Sagan(1996, p. 63) puts this clearly, "A major problem exists, however, concerning the evidence for realist history depends primarily on the statements of motivation by the key decision makers, who have a vested interest in explaining that the choices they made served the national interest". Indeed, Freedman (1980), Williams & Croft (1991), rely to a large extent on official announcements, while Hamwee et al. (1990) rely on interviews.[98] This is particularly problematic for Croft and Williams because they seek to deduce the importance of status concerns in decision making.

[96] See Slivinski (2009), Lewis (2006, 2009), Quinlan, (2006, 2009), Stocker, (2013); Willett (2005)
[97] See Wittgenstein, (1955, §150-155) for a famous articulation of this problem.
[98] Croft and Williams (1991) acknowledge to a certain extent the problems inherent in their task; in their footnotes, they write that "Official publications are noticeable for their scarcity and blandness when examining underlying attitudes concerning security policy" and go on to bemoan that "retired politicians and civil servants rarely write memoirs that are of significant help" (note 6, p. 147). However, the authors do not go far enough in acknowledging the unsuitability of their methodology for their task. Attempting to weigh up the relative importance of status contra security concerns with a methodology that relies largely on looking for their articulation in official quotes is likely to go only one way.

Something, which, as Sagan (1996) suggests, is unlikely to feature highly in public pronouncements, aimed at legitimising policy decisions.[99]

Moreover, and troublingly, the security explanations of nuclear weapons can explain *every* case of nuclear possession; all one needs to articulate is a threat (Sagan, 1996; 63). Sagan observes that this leaves scholars looking for threats that "must" have existed to prompt the development of nuclear weapons, or in this case one that exists to legitimise their maintenance. But even a "threat" is not strictly necessary. After all, if one understands the structure of the system as anarchic and self-help as a subsequent necessity (in the sense neo-realists and the UK policy makers reportedly assume); having nuclear weapons is a rational response in long run. And so realism can explain nuclear possession without specific threats too. Indeed, Booth and Wheeler (1991) named this view as "Structural Nuclearism" and declared the UK nuclear policy a "perfect expression" of it. So, when Sagan (1996) attempts to demonstrate that the decision to develop nuclear weapons by particular states were caused by other forces than "security", the analysis can never convincingly dispel security explanations from the equation. Indeed, a theory that explains *by default* a minority of cases without accounting for the rest is not very useful.[100] The most that we can say is that the UK policy makers seem to believe, and certainly claim that the UK maintains nuclear weapons for security reasons.

This thesis departs quite dramatically from these conventional security accounts of the UK nuclear policy. Instead of seeking to get into the minds of the decision makers, it investigates the public performances of foreign policy. In contrast to these scholars, this thesis holds that the UK government has considerable - though not hegemonic - discursive power in (re)producing the discursive frame through which the British public understand nuclear weapons, UK-Self and international Others. Thus, in contrast to asking why the UK has nuclear weapons, this thesis asks *how* the UK government represents its nuclear weapon policy as legitimate and desirable, which, as the following chapters will show, has not been easy. A 'realist' rationale does not necessarily offer a diplomatically amenable rationale, and moreover, the realist representations of *the international* might legitimise the UK's possession of nuclear weapons but also requires continuous discursive labour to maintain it and discipline alternative discourses that challenge

[99] Even on a personal level, admitting one does anything because of concerns about status is socially awkward, both for other people and oneself.

[100] Thus even if one accepted that those realist assumptions and security concerns "caused" the UK to maintain its nuclear weapons, this still does not tell us very much. It cannot explain how the UK arrived at, and maintain those assumptions while others living under the same anarchic conditions have not. Equally, now the Soviet Union has dissipated, why the UK considers uncertainty and North Korea so dangerous as to necessitate nuclear weapons while most of the rest of the world looks at the same uncertainty and shrugs its collective shoulders. Indeed, the price of parsimony is usually hollowness

the various representations of "uncertainty", "anarchy", and the utility of nuclear weapons in such a world. Nevertheless, some chinks of light amidst these conventional texts point the way towards this thesis' problematization of the discursive maintenance of the UK's nuclear weapons.

Freedman (1980) offers such a window when he writes of the difficulties the UK has faced in finding public rationale for its nuclear weapons that was not "diplomatically awkward". In essence Freedman is analysing how the UK could find a balance in their nuclear rationale between desirability and legitimacy. What Freedman considers the true rationale—self-help and doubt about the US nuclear guarantee—could not be articulated without undermining NATO and angering its allies. Meanwhile, expressing just certainty in the US's nuclear umbrella would have made redundant the need for UK nuclear weapons. Thus, according to Freedman, the UK hit upon the "second the centre of decision making" rationale that managed to constitute a role for the UK's nuclear weapons in NATO, without explicitly expressing doubts about the US nuclear umbrella. Although Freedman's is an objectivist account, his analysis points to the agency the UK government has in constructing meaning for its nuclear weapons and the world that enabled the UK's continued maintenance of nuclear weapons.[101] Further, Freedman's suggestion that the UK's public rationale "is not wholly convincing" (1980, p. 135), indicates that finding a legitimate and desirable rationale—representation of the world and the UK's nuclear weapons—was not easy. Moreover, Witney (1995; 1994) describes how the end of Cold War prompted the need to "refurbish the rationale" and that none of the options available seemed appealing. Witney's refurbishment metaphor more than hints at how the UK government has agency in constructing—or perhaps, given the metaphor—painting a picture with its foreign policy that enables its nuclear weapons maintenance. Further, the difficulties Witney identifies hints at the considerable discursive labour needed to keep the UK's nuclear deterrent from "death by atrophy" (as Witney puts it). All this suggests that conducting a thorough discourse analysis of the UK's nuclear foreign policy performances should prove insightful for understanding *how* the UK maintained its nuclear weapons.

Further grist for this thesis' mill is found when Hamwee et al.(1990) begin to problematize the representations of the UK nuclear policy makers, even if their primary goal remained analysing the assumptions of those policy makers, rather than the meaning produced by their foreign policy performances. The authors draw attention to two discursive habits that serve as a useful prequel to chapters 6 and 7. First, they note that the policymakers "slipped into a kind of

[101] Freedman (1980, p. xv) ends his introduction that the goal of his book is to provide "a book of description and analysis rather than advocacy".

childish banter", or more precisely euphemism, whenever they talked about nuclear war, in contrast to the clear language they used elsewhere (Hamwee et al., 1990, pp. 360–361). Further, the authors also remark upon the "insurance" metaphor commonly used by the "decision-makers" which they note misleadingly "assumes that the possession of nuclear weapons creates no risk for the possessor of nuclear weapons , just as the payment of insurance creates no risk for the policy holder"(1990, p. 261) While the authors do not go further than a couple of paragraphs, their observations fit with much wider international literature encompassing research as diverse as Carol Cohn's (1987) seminal feminist work, and the Harvard Nuclear Study Group (1983, p. 12). The latter, for instance, suggests that "Denial of the horrors of war can be witnessed among civilian strategists, military men, and policymakers in the penchant for euphemisms the use of innocuous language to mask the ugly reality of war." (p.12) Drawing on nukespeak (see chapter 2), and picking up on the UK thread begun by Hamwee et al., but then largely dropped by UK scholars,[102] this thesis analyses how the UK foreign policy representations of its nuclear weapons facilitate the maintenance of the belief in their desirability and legitimacy.

Status Explanations

The following section turns to one of the other most common "factors" that dominate the British public nuclear discourse: Status. Indeed, there is no shortage of sound bites spanning the duration of the nuclear age that support the view that the UK has nuclear weapons primarily to maintain its international status. For example, Margaret Gowing (1986) argued The A-bomb was symbolic of American power and Britain believed that to possess such a weapon would put the it on a similar level [to the US], halting its decline into a second-class nation (Cited in Beach & Gurr, 1999, p. 22) In 1980 Former Foreign Minister Robin Cook argued in parliament "It is time that we adjusted ourselves to the fact that we are a declining medium rage power and looked first and foremost how we use our desperately scarce industrial resources to commercial advantage rather than on grandiose projects which we have inherited from the past" (HC Deb 28 April 1980 vol 977 cc718). In 2012, The former Defence Minister Michael Portillo (2012) commented on the renewal described the decision in the following terms: "It is all nonsense, it is completely past it's sell by date, it is neither independent, neither is it any sort of deterrent, because now we are facing the sorts of enemies, the Taliban, Al Qaeda, that cannot be deterred. It is done in entirely for reasons of national prestige, it is a waste of money and at the margins it is proliferatory."

[102] To my knowledge, and I have read extensively, the only academic peer reviewed article problematizing in a post-positivist manner the discourse of the UK's official nuclear foreign policy is Duncansen and Eschle (2008),an insightful but limited feminist critique of the UK's nuclear weapons White Paper (MoD, 2006)

However, there has been very limited rigorous academic work investigating the status or prestige the UK gets from its nuclear weapons. This is unsurprising. In contrast to theories on nuclear security, there is no well-developed theory similar to neo-realism accounting for the utility in terms of prestige and status a state acquires from its nuclear weapons.[103] This is at least partly because "prestige" and "status" are social objects: non-material, nebulous, highly subjective, contested, and ill-defined (O'Neill, 2006). Thus, attempting to demonstrate even weak causality between whatever an author determines status to be, and material outcomes is extremely difficult, if not impossible. Ultimately this means that neo-realists and positivist scholars have neither the tools nor the will to investigate the relative effect of status. Croft and Williams are an excellent example of the shortcomings, though they do it more justice than most. Indeed, British academic literature is littered with cursory sections, paragraphs and sentences which write off the value or importance of status arguably because the author cannot conceive, except in the simplest terms, what status is, how it is generated, or what effects "it" has.

For instance Freedman's (1980, p. 131) refutation of the "seat at the top table" argument illustrates the limitations of conventional ontologies well. Freedman mocks "the seat at the top table" notion of status, because the UK does not participate in strategic arms control talks[104]. MccGwire (2006, p. 639) similarly claims status used to be important because the UK had a seat at the Soviet-US arms control negotiations in the 1950s but since they lost it in the 1960s, "Nuclear weapons became the lace curtains of Britain's political poverty". These are typically literal materialist measurements of status that need to have identifiable, independent effects. Meanwhile, similar problems arise in the discussions over whether the UK's seat on the UN Security Council is dependent on the UK's possession of nuclear weapons. Quinlan (2006) argues that the UK's seat on the Security Council is not dependent on its nuclear weapons, leading him to conclude that it is unimportant for Britain's nuclear policy makers. MccGwire, while agreeing with Quinlan's analysis that the nuclear weapons do not affect the UK's membership of the P5, suggests instead that this demonstrates how the UK policy makers w*rongly* factor this consideration into the cost benefit analysis of the utility of British nuclear weapons.

These are two common examples that illustrate the limitations of conventional methodology in attempting to account for the effects of status. Indeed, this type of shallow analysis has led to

[103] Though this is increasingly being addressed, see Wohlforth (2009) and Larson et al., (2014)
[104] 10 years later Croft and Williams (1991) cite Freedman's argument un-critiqued

various scholars concluding that status and political gains from nuclear weapons possession are limited. However, depending on the scholar's perspective this leads to different conclusions; Quinlan ("The High Priest of Deterrence") concludes that because status effects are weak, security concerns must be important.[105] While McGuire (2006), a long-term critic of Deterrence (MccGwire, (1984, 1986a, 1986b, 2001, 2002) suggests this indicates that policy makers *wrongly* attribute status to nuclear weapons. A simple pattern emerges in the debate; if a scholar believes in the utility of deterrence for the UK they tend favour the security explanations and downplay status (For example, Bowen, 2010; Freedman, 1980; Quinlan, 2006) whereas if a scholar is suspicious of the utility of deterrence for the UK then status is emphasised in explanation (Beach, 2009; MccGwire, 2006; Ritchie, 2010). Few assert that the UK has its nuclear weapons for status, but maintain that they are particularly useful as a deterrent, nor does anyone argue the opposite - that they have utility for the UK's status, but not as a deterrent.

Status vs. Security: The Wrong Question

Given how the motivations of decision makers are not directly observable, the objects investigated are neither material nor easily measurable, nor necessarily independent, the debate was perhaps still born —at least with the methodology applied—from the get go. Nonetheless the debate has long behaved like an intellectual black hole, sucking in commentary without any prospect of a satisfactory conclusion escaping. Pierre, writing in 1972, recognising this early, puts it aptly: "To engage in debate, as has so often been done before, on whether the British nuclear force has been maintained for reasons of status or security is sterile and fruitless."(Pierre, 1972, p. 306) His brief, perfectly imprecise and deliberately banal take on the debate is perhaps still the best available (if one accepts the status/security dichotomy): "The answer is both and the mix has varied at different times".

However, Nicholas Onuf's (2012) [1989] analysis in his landmark, *World of Our Making,* explains why even Pierre's curt dismissal of the question, in accepting the dichotomy, goes too far. While Onuf argues that states interests "at the requisite level of generality" can categorized into wealth, standing (status), and security, he argues that ultimately security and standing have become so closely aligned that they become inseparable (I will suggest later, often mutually constitutive). Looking at the ease with which contemporary media shares information, Onuf

[105] Quinlan, the leading Ministry of Defence nuclear weapons specialist, was given this nickname post-humously in an article in the Journal of Catholic Thought (Jones, 2013) Given the journal, it seems this was meant as a compliment, however it may also be a nod to the common anti-nuclearist attack on nuclear weapons advocates that subscribing to nuclear deterrence has more in common with religious faith rather than science.

(2012, p. 280) argues "resources previously understood as providing the means for security become measures of state' standing", and moreover, "insofar as war is avoided because its outcome is predictable, the measure of military capabilities substitutes for war as a medium of measurement [of security and thus standing]".[106] A simple thought experiment demonstrates the redundancy of the security/status dichotomy. If overnight every state in the world developed immunity to nuclear weapons, the security benefits they are now represented to offer in terms of deterrence would be wiped out. In this situation states maintaining these weapons would be left with militarily obsolete white elephants. Without their military use, the status derived from maintaining them would evaporate with their military potency.

If the above analysis appears dangerously close to throwing out the baby with the bathwater, it is not intended to suggest that investigating nuclear weapons policy the UK is a cul-de-sac. Only that the formulation of the question and goals of reaching into the minds of decision makers to find out "which was more important security or status" suffers from obvious flaws. However, providing one does away with expecting to make causal claims, both themes of investigation open up to different, but potentially fruitful questions. What status and security explanations both have in common is that they assume that the policy makers considered nuclear weapons to have a positive value in some sense, and that it has been in the UK's interests to possess them. Thus we should ask how these different, not necessarily mutually exclusive positive meanings have been produced. For example, how have policy makers attached positive meanings to their nuclear weapons, and how have they constituted a positive identity through nuclear policies? How have the meanings attached to these weapons and the identity constructions constituted changed? How have various actors marginalized rival negative representations of the anti-nuclear discourse? Ultimately, how have these foreign policy performances helped maintain the belief that nuclear weapons are legitimate and desirable? As Chapter 2 suggested, and chapters 5 and 6 will demonstrate, Hansen's notion of *degrees of Otherness* should prove fruitful for this investigation.

Domestic Politics Explanation

One alternative answer to *why* the UK possesses nuclear weapons suggests domestic actors' interests (over security and prestige) drive nuclear weapons maintenance. According to this view, "nuclear weapons programmes are not obvious or inevitable solutions to international security problems; instead nuclear weapons programmes are solutions looking for a problem to which to attach themselves so as to justify their existence"(Sagan, 1996) These domestic actors

[106] Given Onuf was writing in 1989; it is safe to say the ease with which it is shared and amount of information on each countries capabilities has increased significantly since.

might be political parties, or state bureaucracies (in the UK case the MoD) or the weapons industry. This hypothesis probably has less utility in explaining why the UK first decided to acquire their nuclear weapons, but potentially insightful regarding their continued maintenance.[107] Domestic political pressures may help us understand why the consensus behind nuclear weapons after the Cold War has proved so solid, even when finding a viable rationale appeared so tricky[108].

First, crossing the nuclear threshold, whether to nuclear or non-nuclear status, represents what Hyman (2006a) would classify as a "revolutionary decision"[109]. Notwithstanding how nuclear weapons came to be considered as an expression of strength on defence, changing a policy as grand as a state's nuclear strategy is usually inherently politically risky. Lawrence Freedman puts it well: "The politics of beginning or terminating some activity are usually far more difficult and complicated than the politics of carrying on as before. To add or subtract a nuclear capability would command attention: to maintain it would barely be noticed" (Freedman, 1980, p. 141). Freedman was not specifically referring to electoral risks, but since Labours election defeats of 1983 and 1987 the hypothesis that Labour supports nuclear weapons at least partly for pragmatic (or cynical) electoral reasons has significant support.

For example, Lilleker (2000) and Scott (2006) concur that campaigning on in the 1980s on an anti-nuclear platform has left modern Labour convinced that opposing nuclear weapons is an electoral "suicide note".[110] Indeed, in Lilleker's (2000, p. 230) view, "The lesson of 1983 remains fundamental to the modernisers within the party". According to Lilleker (2000, p. 231) the U-turn from disarmament to staunch support for Trident demonstrates that "the perceived requirements of electoral success were a central motivating element in this transformation". Len Scott**,** five years later, comes to the same conclusion, suggesting that nuclear policy remains a sore point for the Labour party, and that "electoral factors were clearly the driving factor

[107] While there is nothing inevitable about the 40 year period of antagonism that became known as The Cold War, it would appear unlikely that in the aftermath of the Second World War, and within three years of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, that British nuclear acquisition could be seen as just a solution looking for a problem. Nobody knew what the nuclear era would entail and even accepting the methodological shortcomings, Croft and Williams' (1990) analysis that security consideration weighed heaviest, is thus probably at its strongest here. As the Cold War dragged on, and then afterwards, the picture looks different, and this is reflected in the literature.
[108] See Witney(1995; 1994) on the political problem of finding a viable rationale
[109] Hymans (2006b, p. 8) argues that "going nuclear" is an ideal type "big decision" with so much uncertainty involved that "the consequences of going nuclear are simply too vast to allow for a reasonable cost-benefit analysis". I would suggest that going non-nuclear after 50 years of apparently relying on the invisible effects of deterrence is similarly revolutionary
[110] Gerald Kaufman infamously described Labour's manifesto in the 1983 election as "the longest suicide note in history" (Cited in Lilleker, 2000, p. 221). Although the scale of the defeat could be attributed to other causes –Thatcher's nationalist bounce following the recapture of the Falklands/Los Malvinas is an obvious one, the anti-nuclear policy has since been closely associated with electoral disaster for Labour.

within the party" in their move away from the policy of unilateral disarmament (Scott, 2005; 698). Indeed, as I suggest in Chapter 6, Labour has begun to consider unilateral disarmament taboo. Former British general Hugh Beech (2013) indicates such a taboo when he argues, "The label 'unilateralist' is still regarded as the kiss of political death for Labour politicians and played on by the pro-Trident lobby when they run out of convincing arguments for keeping and replacing these nuclear weapons."[111]

The election pragmatism thesis seems quite compelling, and as the next section shows, Ritchie's argument that Labour's identity of "being strong on defence" is an obstacle to disarmament suggests the domestic actor thesis retains contemporary currency. Nonetheless the constructivist question to those posed above remains: "how have nuclear weapons come to represent a policy of being "strong on defence?" and how has the converse, the negative meaning of "non-nuclear security" or as it is normally represented "unilateral disarmament", been maintained 25 years after it was last proposed in an election manifesto? Indeed while the above scholars explain why unilateralism scares Labour – because it lost the 1983 and 1987 elections – a post-structuralism ontology allows us to analyse how that election defeat has been represented, and how the unilateral taboo has been produced and perpetuated in British discourse.

Identity Explanations

Nick Ritchie (2010) is the first serious attempt by a mainstream scholar in the UK's security studies community to bring constructivist methodology to bear upon the British nuclear question.[112] Consequently, he has succeeded in widening the academic discourse perhaps more than any other, providing a plethora of new directions for investigation hitherto left untouched by classic security analyses of the British case.[113] This work, in its objects of analysis and theoretical and ontological commitments to constructivism is the closest of any of the literature to that of this thesis. I will therefore examine it some depth.

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[111] Certainly this toxicity is not quite as timeless as Lewis suggests. After all, Harold Wilson campaigned successfully on a disarmament in the 1964 election using the slogan *It will not be independent and it will not be British and it will not deter*" Although Labour reneged on the promise once in office (Freedman, 1980; Scott, 2006), opposing nuclear weapons at the very least did not stop Labour from winning in the election (even if it is difficult to say whether it helped).

[112] Ritchie (2010) is selected here because it answers the "Big Question" – Ritchie has also weighed in with sharp gusto on the policy debate (Ritchie, 2008, 2009a, 2009a, 2010, 2012; Ritchie & Ingram, 2010)

[113] According to Ritchie his analysis aims to extend the area for investigation beyond the "strategic security framework that privileges political military drivers and apparently rational cost benefit analysis of nuclear threats and nuclear deterrence and nuclear delivery platforms" in order to "augment" it without necessarily intending to supplant it (Ritchie, 2010, p. 467).

Ritchie asks: why has the UK chosen to remain a nuclear power? He goes on to attempt to identify what makes it possible, ideationally and physically, for the UK to maintain its nuclear weapons. Drawing on his earlier work "Deterrence Dogma" (Ritchie, 2009a), Ritchie takes as his starting point that the security case is "weak"[114]. This leads Ritchie to investigate other "drivers" such as the actor networks and collective identities upon which the perception that the UK needs nuclear weapons depends (2010, pp. 469–474). Ritchie outlines four conceptions of the UK identity that "generate" a national interest in deploying nuclear weapons: 1) The UK's identity as a "responsible interventionist 'pivotal' major power 2) the UK identity as a close partner with a "special relationship" to the US 3) The UK identity as leader and protector of Europe 4) New Labour's identity as "strong on defence".

In identifying some positive meanings the UK government performs with its nuclear weapons policy, through the concept of "identity", Ritchie manages (if not explicitly) to overcome the unhelpful status-security dichotomy. Indeed, Ritchie analysis suggests that security and status are almost inseparable from the UK's efforts to construct a positive identity for itself. Ritchie, for example, asserts that British policy elites view nuclear weapons as vital "to enhance Britain's credibility in Washington as a powerful, reliable and responsible allied power... Nuclear weapons are seen as both an important part of the anchor and a symbol of its strength."(2010, p. 472) In other words the shared understanding of the strength and security that both the UK and the US attach to nuclear weapons generates the positive identity in the eyes of the US, which in turn lends the UK status in the eyes of the US and strengthens their relationship. According to Ritchie the UK policy elite believes that nuclear weapons allow it to successfully represent itself as and carry out the "duties" of "a pivotal power", "responsible interventionist" and "protector of Europe". Thus the UK generates status (or a privileged identity – e.g. "protector of Europe") from the security effects that weapon are considered to constitute. It therefore implies that it is impossible to identify, isolate and therefore judge the relative "importance" of each in explaining retention.

However, problematically, Ritchie appears to consider objective security drivers to be separate from conceptions of UK identity. This is clear from the formulation of the puzzle for Ritchie's paper: "the strategic security case for the UK remaining a nuclear power, however, is weak […] why then has the UK chosen to remain a nuclear power?"(2010, p.465) Ritchie then goes on to explain how the UK's conception of identity drives the UK's possession of nuclear weapons,

[114] This statement is not unproblematic. It is based on a Ritchie (2009a) critique of the White Paper (2006) – the official rationale – for renewal, as many historians have argued rarely tells the whole story. Second, it was not so weak that it did not get passed by parliament, so it was at least sufficient to serve its purpose.

apparently in isolation from potentially real, objective and separate security drivers. Ritchie suggests "Britain's nuclear weapons are *assigned* particular meanings within the context of these identities such that they are defined in part as essential to the production and reproduction of those identities" (Ritchie, 2010, p.468) (my emphasis). Yet Ritchie overlooks that perhaps the most central meaning "assigned" to British nuclear weapons is the representation of the utility those weapons provide in UK's defence. This representation is central to all the various identities Ritchie suggests the UK's nuclear weapons sustain. It follows then that if the respective audiences did not believe that the nuclear weapons had security utility, then their value in the production of the various identities would surely be vastly reduced. By declaring that the strategic utility of nuclear weapons is "weak" from the outset Ritchie therefore misses the opportunity to look at the processes which "assign" that meaning. Ritchie holds that "collective identities are not static or everlasting but must be continually reproduced as governments interact with each other" (*Ibid*), yet oddly Ritchie does not consider that the meanings attached to nuclear weapons are similarly contingent.

Thus, fixated on the UK's collective identity, Ritchie loses sight of the other end of the stick: representation of policy, which is also a discursive practice.[115] In fact, the strategic security case for nuclear weapons is a blank slate: perfectly hypothetical, the list of what one deters or has deterred by its nuclear weapons can be as long or as small as one's imagination allow—and thus never proven (see Chapter 4). Whether an interpretation generates currency, depends upon who you can convince to share it. Ritchie grasps this in relation to conceptions of identity but apparently not representations of nuclear weapons reputed security giving properties. Put another way, when Ritchie states the strategic case is "weak", it is only another currently subjugated representation of the utility of nuclear weapons to Britain in the national and international discourse. Thus Ritchie, in removing the "security" case from the discursive realm suffers from a common problem; he wishes to utilise the insights that come from recognising the world is discursively constituted, while maintaining that there is some objectively right, better, or correct "truth" available (Buzan et al., 1998, pp. 205–206).

In sum, Ritchie's paper provides a welcome broadening of the British security literature, but the paper only knocks on doors rather than walking through them. In particular, Ritchie draws attention to—but does not investigate fully—the "political processes" and "interpretive framework" involved in the construction of "enemy images". Equally, while Ritchie's proto-articulation of the relationship between the UK's nuclear weapons policy to its identity, is

[115] Indeed, Hansen (2006) argues the two are mutually constitutive and linked through discourse.

insightful but limited. Nonetheless, Ritchie's article is a great leap forward—out of the status-security *cul de sac*—and provides an excellent opening for the following analyses of the UK's identity/nuclear policy nexus. An analysis that will include what Ritchie overlooks: how the positive meanings attached to the UK's nuclear weapons, and the construction of the international that constitutes their reputed necessity.

Mid- Chapter Review

The previous section reviewed various answers the literature has provided to the question: "Why does the UK possess nuclear weapons?" I suggested that the *security* answer, while possibly quite accurate on its own terms, suffers from not questioning how those security qualities of nuclear weapons and the threats they are claimed to deter, came to be accepted, and reproduced so as to appear compelling to the various audiences of the UK's nuclear policy performances. Meanwhile, I argued the second explanation, *status*, suffers from being beyond the scope of conventional analysis, and cannot be meaningfully separated from "security". This dichotomy and "debate", I therefore suggested, was a dead end. The third explanation, *domestic politics*, is certainly compelling: that Labour's previous aversion to nuclear weapons drives 20th century maintenance. I suggested this research points towards a discourse analyse of how the 1980s election defeats have continued to generate negative meaning for non-nuclear security well into the 21st century. Ultimately though, I have sought to refute that there can be one compelling "explanation". Instead William's Connolly's concept of *emergent causality* seems particularly apt for the British nuclear question puzzle. In this conception, instead of looking for singular isolated causes, politics and social world is understood as

> [A] resonant process in which diverse elements infiltrate into the others, metabolizing into a moving complex causation as resonance between elements that become fused together to a considerable degree. Here causality, as relations of dependence between separate factors, morphs into energized complexities of mutual imbrication and inter-involvement, in which heretofore unconnected or loosely associated elements fold, blend, emulsify, and dissolve into each other, forging a qualitative assemblage resistant to classical models of explanation (Cited in Bialasiewicz et al., 2007; Connolly, 2005, p. 870)

As Chapters 6 and 7 will illustrate, the UK's nuclear weapons policy maintenance fits Connolly's conception of emergent causality well. Indeed, this thesis will explore the UK's nuclear foreign policy and investigate how the mutually imbricated, inter-involved facets of the UK government discourse have made the continued maintenance possible.

Post-Positivist Nuclear Reference Points

As the above should suggest, by problematizing the discursive maintenance of the UK's nuclear weapons programme this thesis aims to fill a void in mainstream British nuclear weapons research. However I am far from a pioneer, this thesis builds upon post-positivist scholarship in the wider IR, and the wider the nuclear weapons field. [116] Further, while this thesis has no direct precursor in British nuclear weapons research, a number of post-positivist informed scholars have investigated related empirical puzzles and which will serve as touchstones for my analysis.

Anthropologist Hugh Gusterson's collective work often approaches both the ontological commitments and the puzzles tackled in this thesis.[117] He shares similar post-positivist ontology and epistemology and tackles similar "how" puzzles of nuclear maintenance. In his contemporary anthropological classic *Nuclear Rites: A Weapons Laboratory at the End of the Cold War,* Gusterson spent two years interviewing nuclear weapons scientists and ant-nuclear activists to investigate "How some people came to believe [...] that the development of nuclear weapons made both superpowers more secure?" while the others held the opposite view equally firmly(1998a, p. 6). Gusterson, in drawing on Foucault, and investigating the socialization practices that create specific "regimes of truth", shares the over-arching puzzle of my first question, and given his investigation was undertaken at the end of the Cold War, it shares the temporal puzzle of my second. However, in tackling the problem from the level of the bureaucracy, rather than the national foreign policy discourse, and in the US rather than the UK, Gusterson provides a post-positivist reference point, rather than landmark for my British investigation.

Gusterson (1999b) "Nuclear weapons and the other in the Western Imagination" moves closer still to the puzzles addressed in this thesis. Again taking a discursive methodology, Gusterson explores the Western international nuclear policy discourse to investigate how the nuclear armed states reconcile their anti-proliferation policies with their unwillingness to pursue disarmament. He convincingly argues that the dominant discourse that "stabilizes" "nuclear apartheid" (1999, p. 113) in the West is a form of "nuclear orientalism". [118] This discourse, argues Gusterson is a variation on old colonial discourse first recognised by Edward Said, and

[116] As Chapter 2 discussed, this thesis is theoretically grounded in (and indebted to) the burgeoning works of post-positivists scholarship, particularly Michel Foucault, Iver Neumann, Richard Ashley, Ole Waever, David Campbell, Thaddeus Jackson, Hugh Gusterson, and obviously Lene Hansen.

[117] See Gusterson (2004) for a collection of his writings on nuclear weapons, but also *Nuclear Rites* (Gusterson, 1998)

[118] This is the term that non-nuclear weapons states have used to describe the unfairness of the NPT's division of the world into "legal" nuclear weapons states (NWS) and non-nuclear weapons states (NNWS) who under the NPT can never become NWS.

which permits that "[I]n Western discourse nuclear weapons are represented so that "theirs" [the third world's] are a problem while "ours" are not."(1999b, p. 113) The nuclear policy problem that Gusterson directly addresses relates closely to my third puzzle, and the nuclear orientalism discourse he suggests solves it, certainly features in the British nuclear policy discourse. However, while Gusterson focuses on the international orientalist discourse, this paper investigates the UK's specific nuclear discourse. Certainly the UK's discourse does not disprove Gusterson's thesis. However, unsurprisingly the UK's has several peculiarly British discursive strategies for stabilising as well. Therefore, this thesis seeks to answer in greater depth how Britain has sought to overcome the problem of justifying "nuclear apartheid" Gusterson identifies, but also how it has staved off the attacks from the rival discourse produced by the UK's anti-nuclear movement and Labour.

Meanwhile, Tannenwald (1999, 2005, 2007) provides landmark research that point towards the problematization of the UK's discursive maintenance of its nuclear weapons. Tannenwald's key claim is that on balance, the norm of non-use, and the growing stigmatization of nuclear weapons can better account for the non-use of nuclear weapons by the US than the material factors emphasised by realists[119]. Although her object of analysis is only indirectly related to this thesis, in showing how the nuclear taboo has risen in opposition to the nuclear weapons states interests, Tannenwald (2005) provides important context to problem facing UK policy makers: with the international taboo gaining in strength through the years, particularly internationally, maintaining the UK's nuclear weapons has increasingly required performing a foreign policy that justifies those nuclear weapons in reference, or reverence to, the growing nuclear taboo itself. Moreover, Tannenwald (2005, pp. 24–26) further supports this thesis' puzzle by illustrating how the current nuclear taboo on use was not as inevitable as it may seem today, and was earlier contested by the Eisenhower administration which sought to "conventionalize" nuclear weapons the 1950s. This indicates that governments cannot take foreign policy discursive hegemony for granted, and their representations can be successfully challenged by normally weaker discursive actors (in Tannenwald's case, global civil society). This insight reinforces the warrant for this thesis problematization: the UK has needed to maintain and (re)produce nuclear foreign policy discourse that successfully marginalizes alternatives, lest it become subjugated by anti-nuclearist oppositional discourse (Chapter 4).

[119] See for example Sagan (2004).

British Post-Positivist Nuclear Research

Duncanson and Eschle (2008) provide a sharp, if narrow feminist deconstruction of the 2006 White Paper that set in motion the renewal of Trident. Although the authors labour somewhat under the essentialism of their feminist perspective, and this leads them striving a little too hard to find masculine/feminine dichotomies, they do succeed in dissecting several internal instabilities in the White Paper (MoD, 2006) that relate to the themes of this thesis.[120] First, the authors identify a tension between Labour's ethical leader identity, and its status governing a nuclear weapon state. They suggest this reveals itself in "a kind of paradoxical boasting about the smallness of the British nuclear armoury". Chapter 6 names this discursive strategy, found across the UK's 21st century nuclear discourse, as the *counting bombs narrative*. However, Chapter 6 also suggests that as well as revealing tensions between these two constructions of the UK Self, the counting bombs narrative also helps the UK reconcile its nuclear weapons with its new construction of the UK-Self as a "leader" of disarmament. Second, Duncanson and Eschle (2008, p. 550) problematize the representations of the UKs nuclear weapons. Drawing on Cohn's conception of "technostrategic" language – which sits within the nukespeak family (Chapter 2) - the authors note how the White Paper's language is saturated with vague abstraction that "serves to obscure" the destructiveness of the UK's nuclear weapons. Again, this thesis picks up this theme, but rather than seeking to show how it forms part of the UK's gendered nuclear discourse, I will analyse how it serves to help legitimise the UK's nuclear weapons and reconcile them with their construction of their peaceful Self-identity. Finally, the authors identify the White Paper's use of dubious axioms, most notably for this thesis its unproblematic assertion of what Chapter 4 calls the "*nuclear peace correlation*": "For 50 years our independent nuclear deterrent has provided he ultimate assurance of our national security" (MoD 2006, quoted in Duncanson & Eschle, 2008, p. 551). However, the author's narrow focus on one policy paper precludes putting this key representation into its performative context. Chapter 5 will address this shortcoming and show how Thatcher's government's *securitization* of the Soviet Union was key to embedding this belief in the UK's "nuclear peace" within the UK discourse, providing the discursive labour for the UK's 21st century performance of the axiom.

[120] While recognising that my male privilege makes me insensitive to masculinized discourse, when the authors juxtapose Carol Cohn's description of the gendered discourse of defence analysts to the White Paper, the problem of applying a pre-discursive expectation of masculinized discourse is apparent. The authors quote Cohn's famous description of nuclear lectures filled with: "vertical erector launchers, thrust-to-weight ratios, soft lay downs, deep penetration, and the comparative advantages of protracted versus spasm attacks—or what one military adviser to the National Security Council has called "releasing 70 to 80 per cent of our megatonnage in one orgasmic whump." While the best they can find in the White Paper is "we note the roll call of past submarine names: Astute, Resolution, Swiftsure and Vanguard, connoting strength, resolve and action." Indeed, when the authors complain that the "responsible protector" identity of the UK articulated in the White Paper was also masculinized, I felt the authors were in danger of reproducing the gendered discourse they despise: while conceding that the protector identity is probably generally associated with men, one could also produce a coherent relatively mainstream discourse of women as protectors.

Finally, while not strictly post-positivist, Croft (1994) provides an un-glamorous but insightful prelude to this thesis. Croft contends that the UK has not been characterised by two breakdowns in consensus in the 1950s/60s and the 1980s but rather that these were "upsurges in the salience of a body of thought and assumptions that have always been present in the British security debate" (Croft, 1994, p. 228). In not so many words, Croft articulates the long term presence of two discourses in UK society, the dominant "orthodox" "security paradigm" and the marginalized "alternative" anti-nuclear discourse. Croft does not problematize how the "orthodox" discourse has achieved dominance, but rather focuses on why they cannot be reconciled: "Fundamentally there is no compromise between these two positions and there will, therefore, continue to be a sharp note of discord in the British security debate over nuclear weapons for the foreseeable future"(Croft, 1994, p. 241). This thesis concurs with Croft's description of two long term discourses, and on their irreconcilability (Chapter 4 elaborates on this, and its implications in more depth) but, as the last chapter made clear, does not consider the hegemony of particular discourses as meritocratic or inevitable but rather as the function of productive power. This thesis' problematization builds on Croft, but by taking a post-structuralist ontology opens up for analysing how UK governments have performed foreign policies that maintain the dominance of the "orthodox" construction of the world, while disciplining the "alternative" discourse (Chapter 5 & 6). In addition, Croft's analysis also suggests why this matters and supports the warrant of this thesis: he suggests that the two periods of Labour opposition to nuclear weapons were prompted by greater salience of the alternative discourse. Thus, Croft indirectly shows why maintaining the orthodox discourse's dominance and marginalizing the alternative has been important to keeping support for the maintenance of the UK's nuclear weapons.

Concluding the Review

Above, I provided a concise account of the breadth of the explanations found in the UK's nuclear weapons literature. None come close to approaching the problematization of the UK's nuclear weapons discourse; nonetheless this exercise has provided several signposts for my thesis. These security scholars, in illuminating a gap between beliefs and policy performance, suggest that the UK government has required a certain discursive imagination to float their nuclear boats. Further, their emphasis on objective factors and deducing the "real" motivations has left a space for this thesis' investigation of subjectivities and specifically how UK governments (re)produce a reality in British discourse that enables the maintenance of the nuclear weapons. In addition, the limited materialist nature of the UK's security scholars' investigations into status further indicates that the discursive investigation of the frequently mutually constitutive

relationship between status and security will prove insightful. A discursive approach can also augment the domestic politics explanation found in the literature by analysing how it has been reproduced and reified to produce almost a "unilateral taboo" in UK domestic politics. Meanwhile, the post-positivist research provides further contextual ballast: Tannenwald for providing key context to the UK's growing difficulty in constituting its nuclear weapons as legitimate internationally; Duncansen and Eschle for unpicking internal instabilities in the UK's 2006 White Paper that this thesis investigates across longer time period and broader array of texts; Gusterson in affirming the productive possibilities of taking a discursive approach to nuclear puzzles similar to mine; and Croft's in describing the long term existence of the UK's pro-and anti-nuclear discourses.

Chapter's 6 and 7 will follow these signposts, and show how my discursive approach and modified foreign policy/identity nexus can help answer questions not yet asked by the UK literature on nuclear weapons. First though, the next chapter sketches out and analyses the international nuclear discourses that frame, enable and limit the UK's nuclear foreign policy performances.

Chapter 4

Constructing the Nuclear Weapon Problem

We all know the atomic bomb is very dangerous. Since it may be used against us we must get ready for it, just as we are ready for many other dangers that are around us all the time. Fire is a danger. It can burn whole buildings if someone is careless. But we are ready for fire. We have a fine fire department to put out the fire, and you have fire drills in your school so you know what to do. Automobiles can be dangerous too. They sometimes cause bad accidents. But we are ready, we have safety rules that car drivers and people who are walking must obey. Now we must be ready for a new danger, the atomic bomb.

- Bert the Turtle, *Duck and Cover*, 1951— a nuclear safety video made by the US government

To analyse the UK's nuclear regime of truth, it is necessary to understand the international discursive economy in which it is situated. The international nuclear discourses and the institutional structures which nuclear weapons have spawned provide both the discursive resources from which the UK draws, but also constitute the limits within which it operates. First this chapter sketches key representations of the "nuclearist" and "anti-nuclear" discourses (to borrow Hugh Gusterson's intuitive terminology (1998)). These discourses share an inter-subjective understanding of nuclear weapons destructive capacity however produce very different versions of the world's nuclear reality. These "discourses" should be understood as ideal types, analytic constructions that seek to illuminate the key points of contestation and instabilities, rather than accurate reflections of empirical reality.[121] (Hansen, 2006, pp. 52–53) Moreover, nor should each person cited be taken as either a self-identifying nuclearist or an anti-nuclearist, but rather understood as having articulated representations that fit within these ideal types. Sketching out key contested representations of reality, I show how the respective nuclearist and anti-nuclearist contested constitution of the world's *Nuclear Weapons Problem* lead to opposite policy conclusions: nuclear abolition and nuclear possession and proliferation. The next section argues that the nature of the theory and empirics that the rival discourses contest, and the willingness of NWS to draw from both, means that neither can ever fully marginalize the other. The final section will then reflect on how the nature of the points of

[121] For example, to my knowledge, none of the writers featured calls themselves a "nuclearist". With the exception of a relatively small gang of neo-realists, the nuclearist position in full (including pro-proliferation) is quite marginal and certainly not reflected in government policy. Most NWS have performed many of the nuclearist representations (nuclear peace, expressed faith in deterrence, scepticism towards disarmament) but stop short at the logical conclusion – nuclear weapons proliferation would help world peace.

contention provide discursive opportunities and obstacles for NWS, specifically the UK, in their task of presenting their maintenance of nuclear weapons as legitimate and desirable.

The Nuclear Era: Representing Destruction

Even before the first successful nuclear weapons test in Nevada in 1944, nuclear weapons were constituted as a threat to mankind and thus a problem for the world. Their capacity for destructiveness that is universally acknowledged makes it very difficult to represent nuclear weapons as unqualified positive development for human kind. Preceded by the global, ancient and hegemonic representation of destruction and death as generally bad things to be avoided, it was always likely that the invention of nuclear weapons would raise alarm.[122] Indeed, even before the1945 bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, 70 of the scientists that worked on the Manhattan Project signed a petition pleading that the US president not use the atom bomb on Japan fearing that "the precedent of using these newly liberated forces of nature for purposes of destruction may have to bear the responsibility of opening the door to an era of devastation on an unimaginable scale" (70 Scientists from the Manhattan Project, 1945).[123] The letter went on presciently, arguing that if the US did not show restraint "the cities of the United States as well as the cities of other nations will be in continuous danger of sudden annihilation." Truman never did receive the petition and the warning went unheeded.

The petitioning scientists' fears were realised, and the meaning of the weapon they invented has been the source of fierce debate ever since. The power to kill sustains two common representations: force for good to be harnessed for the security, or a force that by its existence imperils security. Which representation that dominates in a particular society cannot be assumed to derive automatically from material qualities of an object itself. For example, the US understands the right to bear arms as an inalienable right to protect oneself, while in most places in Europe the gun is prohibited, precisely to protect civilians from the harm they could do. This duality is not always present, a consensus exists in the world that anthrax should not be utilized for war. For an actor to legitimize its production of a tool for killing, for example, nuclear weapons, it requires a discourse that grants them utility. Nuclear weapons, as the following will demonstrate, are associated with a highly developed discourse that grants them unique peace-giving qualities and thus legitimacy. But given the scale of nuclear weapons

[122] This might appear facetious but it is perfectly possible to represent death and destruction in a positive manner, indeed many discourses do. For example some people consider death a sexual fantasy, meanwhile throwing a TV out of a window for no reason is an iconic symbol of Rock n' Roll. However, these are undoubtedly marginal discourses and thus it can safely be claimed that to undertake actions which cause death and destruction or even to threaten it, one typically needs a legitimizing principle.

[123]The Manhattan Project was the US and UK project, began during the Second World War, that developed the first nuclear weapon.

destructive capacity, and the hegemonic worldwide aversion to death and destruction, it is unsurprising that a rival anti-nuclear discourse has been produced in parallel, even within the nuclear weapons states themselves.[124]

Nuclearist Discourse

The nuclearist discourse begins from the central assumption that unilateral disarmament is utopian and therefore rather than chasing impossible dreams, the international community must concentrate on how to manage the dangers of nuclear weapons. Many of the nuclearist representations outlined here come from the neo-realist[125] camp of IR which holds that in an anarchic international system behaving rationally involves following the principle of "self-help".[126] Understanding nuclear weapons as the "ultimate form of self-help", nuclearists cannot envision a rational state willing to forego the reputed security benefits nuclear weapons provide (Gusterson, 1998, p. 7)

Therefore, nuclearists argue, or more often assume, that nuclear weapons cannot be "disinvented".[127] Rather than seeking to abolish them, management of the nuclear weapons represents the *only* viable policy option available. Kenneth Waltz(1981) offers a good example of how the nuclearist discourse often takes this for granted: "Fearing the world's destruction, one may prefer a world of conventional great powers having a higher probability of fighting less destructive wars to a world of nuclear great powers having a lower probability of fighting more destructive wars. But that choice *effectively disappeared* with the production of atomic bombs by the United States during World War II" (my emphasis). The Harvard Nuclear Study Group (1983) expresses this constitution of the nuclear problem more precisely "Atomic escapism must be avoided. One form of escapism is to believe that nuclear weapons will go away. They will not. Because they will not, mankind must learn to live with them if we are to live at all." Thus, the *only* option for prudent governments is to seek to manage the nuclear weapons problem to maximise security.

Management Strategies: Deterrence and Arms Control

The nuclearist discourse constitutes nuclear weapons destructiveness as possible to *manage* and harness for peace. While nuclear weapons may have the capacity to cause massive

[124]Indeed, while the pro-gun lobby in the US currently maintains a firm grip on political power, the anti-gun movement remains significant.
[125] I use this term for the sake of ease, I do not mean to intend that they hold identical positions but at least share a lot of the same assumptions.
[126] For a full explanation of neo-realist theory that leads to this conclusions see neo-realist nuclear weapons writings (for example, Mearsheimer, 1990; Waltz, 1979)
[127] For example, Margaret Thatcher was keen this formulation (see Chapter 5)

destruction, it is precisely that unique level of destructiveness that allows nuclear weapons *management strategies* to bring stability and peace to international relations between states. The core management strategies captured within nuclearist discourse are the practices of nuclear deterrence and arms control (not to be mixed up with disarmament).[128] Theorizing how to deter changing nuclear threats, maintain stability of deterrence amidst technological advances in nuclear weapons systems, and co-operate effectively in arms control negotiations, constituted the mainstay of Security Studies until the late 1980s (Buzan & Hansen, 2009; Freedman, 2004). While the "epistemic community" of arms control may appear to produce anti-nuclearist discourse, its emphasis on *managing* nuclear weapons, rather than abolishing them puts it in the nuclearist discourse, even if anti-nuclearists may prefer to represent some of the measures advanced by arms control as steps towards disarmament (Adler, 1992; Krause & Latham, 1998, p. 27).

Put simply a working nuclear deterrent involves the "possession of sufficient nuclear capabilities to assure one's relevant adversaries of their destruction in the event of war" (Mesquita & Riker, 1982, p. 289) and thus deter them from undertaking aggression that might lead to said war. Nuclear weapons make such great deterrents according to Waltz (1981) because "They make the cost of war seem frighteningly high and thus discourage states from starting any wars that might lead to the use of such weapons". What improves the credibility of the deterrent, how much is needed to deter, how to ensure the invulnerability of a deterrent, how to reduce the incentives of a first strike, and so on comprised some of the typical practical puzzles for Security Studies scholars (Buzan & Hansen, 2009; Gusterson, 1999a). All these policy questions conceptualise nuclear weapons as a management problem to be solved through deterrence; they presume there is an answer to the puzzle of maintaining an effective and safe nuclear deterrent, even if scholars disagree about what that might be. While deterrence theorists during the Cold War typically devised complex models and games to determine what an effective deterrent required, Waltz considers deterrence relatively straightforward: "A low probability of carrying a highly destructive attack home is sufficient for deterrence." Various sorts of nuclear deterrence have been put into practice by the nuclear armed states; however the key representation of empirics that the nuclearist discourse uses to buttress their claims about the utility of nuclear deterrence stems from the reputed success of NATO's nuclear deterrence during the Cold War.

[128] See Adler (1992) for a more in-depth analysis of the arms control epistemic community.

Deterrence at Work: "Nuclear Peace"

The nuclearist discourse represents the "Long peace" in Europe as evidence of the possibility of managing nuclear weapons safely, and of how their destructiveness can be harnessed for peace. Michael Toner offers a particularly bullish example as he imagines what he would like to say to the unilateral disarmament advocate Dr Helen Caldecott "For the sake of God and humanity, madam, will you not recognize that the peace we all prize so dearly is preserved best by the prudent management of power [nuclear weapons], not naively wishing it out of existence"(Toner, 1987, p. 69). Meanwhile, Waltz (1981, p. 26) is a little more reflective when making a similar point, "Nuclear weapons have not been fired in anger in a world in which more than one country has them. We have enjoyed three decades of *nuclear peace* and may enjoy many more. But we can never have a guarantee. We may be grateful for decades of nuclear peace and for the discouragement of conventional war among those who have nuclear weapon" [my emphasis]. These quotes are taken from the 1980s but "nuclear peace" certainly still has many followers in the 21st century. Julian Lewis (2006, p. 298), who won the *Trench Gascoigne Essay Prize* in 2005 for *Disarmament or Peace in the 21st Century* which argues: "the fact that there were so many small but deadly wars fought between client states of the superpowers (but not between the superpowers themselves) strongly suggests that the mutual threat of nuclear annihilation had something to do with the restraint exercised by the superpowers themselves."[129] Finally, "The High Priest of Deterrence", the late Michael Quinlan (2007, p. 11) argues: "It is reasonable to judge, *even though it is impossible to prove*, that nuclear weapons have played a large part in the remarkable absence of war between advanced major states since 1945" I added emphasis here because the nuclearist discourse cannot "prove" that nuclear deterrence works, and thus this key representation remains heavily contested.

Proliferation Begets Peace

The late Kenneth Waltz's (1981) monograph *The Spread of Nuclear weapons: Why more may be better* takes the nuclearist representations outlined above to their logical conclusion. He provides perhaps the most compelling and well-known articulations of the nuclearist representation of deterrence and its effects, and why weapons proliferation should be embraced rather than abolished First, as noted above Waltz(1981, p. 34) has serious faith in nuclear deterrence, claiming that under the right management it produces a balance of terror that produces peace, arguing that "given the massive numbers of American and Russian warheads, and given the impossibility of one side destroying enough of the other side's missiles to make a retaliatory strike bearable, the balance of terror is *indestructible*"(my emphasis).

[129]The Trench Gascoigne Essay Prize is the Royal United Services Institute's annual competition awarded for original writing on contemporary issues of national and international defence and security.

However, for Waltz, the US and Russia is not a unique case and he argues instead that "Deterrent balances are also inherently stable" (Ibid, p.25). Therefore, Waltz does not see any reason why these benefits he attributes to nuclear weapons for the superpowers would not also have a similar peace-bringing quality to relations between other states, provided proliferation is managed carefully. Indeed, Waltz concludes his monograph arguing "the slow spread of nuclear weapons will promote peace and reinforce international stability." (Ibid, p. 32) Waltz stayed true to his position throughout his life, and took the controversial stance that Iran acquiring nuclear weapons would make the Middle East more secure (Kahl & Waltz, 2012).

Waltz's faith in deterrence and nuclear weapons peace bringing qualities is reproduced by other prominent neo-realists. For example, Bueno & Riker's (1982, p. 286) famous model suggested that "Once half the nations in the system have nuclear weapons, the number of possible nuclear attacks diminishes, going to zero when all countries have sufficient capabilities to deter their relevant adversaries". While conceding that their model had limitations, the authors argue their analysis "behooves the American foreign policy establishment to consider, on a case by case basis, the merits of promoting nuclear proliferation."(1982, p.303) Meanwhile, drawing on Bueno and Riker, John Mearsheimer (1990, 1992) argued immediately after the Cold War that Germany acquiring nuclear weapons would help avoid an arms race in Europe and that Ukraine should keep the nuclear weapons it inherited to deter Russian aggression.

In summary the nuclearist discourse I have outlined[130] has four key representations. First, nuclear weapons cannot be *disinvented*, therefore, even if one does not believe the peaceful effects of nuclear weapons are worth the risk, they assert there is no alternative to attempting to *manage* the nuclear problem. Two, nuclear weapons are extremely destructive, however this can be managed safely through nuclear deterrence which makes war between nuclear armed states so unavoidably destructive, it therefore offers unrivalled utility for avoiding war between states. Three, the *nuclear peace* in Europe is testament to the effectiveness of deterrence and the possibility of managing nuclear weapons safely. Four, because of these peace bringing qualities of nuclear weapons, instead of fighting proliferation, the world should instead seek to manage the spread of nuclear weapons and the further spread their peaceful effects.

The first three key representations outlined above have proved relatively common in the international, and these representations seem to point to the conclusion that nuclear

[130] It is worth noting that the policy conclusion of the nuclearist discourse outlined above is marginal in international politics, and for the most part is limited to a small band of influential realists in academia. The NWS, including the UK, do produce and reproduce many commonplaces of the nuclearist discourse, however *none* represent proliferation as desirable; instead they conduct policies to impede it.

proliferation may not be a bad thing. However, it must be noted that this last representation of the nuclearist discourse sketched here is relatively marginal in the international, mainly limited to a small but influential group of neo-realist scholars; certainly, none of the NWS—while often producing variations on the other representations of nuclearist discourse—do *not* represent nuclear weapon proliferation as desirable. Thus the latter section in this chapter will argue that the NWS governments' willingness to mobilise the first three representations but oppose nuclear proliferation destabilises their nuclear policy discourse. However, the nuclearist discourse, while internally stable, has several vulnerabilities that the anti-nuclearists contest.

The Anti-Nuclearist Discourse

The anti-nuclearist discourse also takes the destructiveness of nuclear weapons as its starting point, but reaches opposite conclusions. The central thesis that illuminates almost most of the anti-nuclearist literature is that nuclear weapons cannot be managed safely, and therefore must be eliminated. Robert McNamara's (cited by McGuire 2004, p.126) quasi-syllogism sums up anti-nuclearist logic succinctly: "(1) nuclear weapons make nuclear war possible, (2) major nuclear war has the unique capacity to destroy our present civilization and jeopardize the survival of the human race; (3)Human fallibility means that a nuclear exchange is ultimately inevitable."[131] The anti-nuclearist discourse typically produces representations that orbit these three points. Indeed, if the government and nuclearist discourse (see next section) emphasise the manageability of nuclear weapons, through deterrence, the anti-nuclearists have produced, a vast amount of research, fiction, pamphlets, and campaigns constituting the nuclear weapons problem as *both* potentially apocalyptic and beyond the control of human management strategies. Indeed, the anti nuclearist's discourse has grown rapidly since the nuclear era began[132] and can draw upon a deep and widely discursive economy.[133] It is relevant for this thesis because it constitutes the discourse which both Thatcher and Blair nuclear discourses had to marginalize in order to ensure that they successfully presented the UK's maintenance of nuclear weapons as legitimate and desirable.

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[131] See also the Canberra Commission Report (Canberra Commission, 1996) and The New Agenda Coalition (1998) statement for significant examples of the same anti-nuclearist point.

[132] And arguably earlier: H G Wells' (1988)[1914] The World Set Free, which 30 years before their invention describes a world held captive to "atomic bombs" dropped by aeroplane and capable of unprecedented destructive power.

[133] Continuous whirring of the anti-nuclear movement in the background of most nuclear weapons states, particularly the UK. The CND and Acronym institute produce a continuous stream of literature. In recent years this remains fairly marginal to the mainstream discourse, but in times of high nuclear tension the UK nuclear movement has generated mass opposition to nuclear weapons. However, beyond academia and activists, the anti-nuclear discourse however has long pervaded popular culture. While, Academic scholarship discusses the feasibility of stable nuclear deterrence, other actors, notably the Church offers ethical opposition to the maintenance of nuclear weapons, and threatening annihilation in the name of peace (Young, 1983)

Representing the Risk of Nuclear War

Scholars have provided ballast to the anti-nuclearism discourse by theorizing and documenting when and why states may not behave as rationally as the nuclearist models predict, and thus why nuclear weapons cannot be managed safely. For example, Scott Sagan, in his debate with the Waltz (Sagan, 1994; Sagan & Waltz, 1995) argues why the military, political leaders and bureaucracies may not behave rationally and thus why a nuclear accident must be expected (and indeed has happened[134]). Meanwhile, building on the assumption of human fallibility statistician CS Snow Erik (in)famously predicted in 1960 that "at the most, ten years some of these bombs are going off". Those ten years have since come and gone but data analysts now make the more temporally humble claim that nuclear war is inevitable *eventually*, and the more nuclear weapons the world has the more likely a nuclear accident is to occur. As, nuclearists' complain, the "statistical certainty" rhetorical commonplace has become an under examined mantra.[135] Perhaps with this criticism in mind, other scholars have sought to uncover concrete evidence to unsettle nuclearist complacency. For example, Schlosser (2013a) meticulously documents the great lengths the US went to, seeking to manage its nuclear stockpile safely; and how they still often failed, but hid accidents from their public in the name of "national security".

Questioning "Nuclear Peace"

Scholars have also challenged the empirical record of nuclearist claim that the long peace is proof of deterrence working and instead argue in various ways that nuclear deterrence's utility is an illusion. For example, Mueller (1988, 1998) claims nuclear weapons have been irrelevant to the "long peace in Europe". As George Kennan (1982) repeatedly argued, one can plausibly explain the absence of war between East and West as a consequence of the Soviet's fears about their border with China, and the expense and hassle involved in invading and occupying hostile states. Meanwhile, Lebow and Stein (1989, p. 208)trace nuclearist's problem to their tendency towards abstract modelling arguing that "[r]ational deterrence theories are poorly specified theories about non-existent decision makers operating in non-existent environments" and when tested against the historical record, these models come up wanting. Furthermore, MccGwire has long argued that deterrence produces and embeds the antagonism that it seeks to manage, which caused all periods of détente between superpowers to be temporary (MccGwire, 1985, 1986b, 2001).

Anti-nuclear academic work is frequently mirrored and actualized in fiction and disseminated

[134] He documents accidents and near-misses, arguing that Waltz's complacency about the risks of accident are unfounded.

[135] See Waltz's rebuttal to Sagan in *The Spread of Nuclear Weapons: A debate* (Sagan & Waltz, 1995)

across the broader public sphere. Stanley Kubrick's Dr Strangelove (1964) remains probably the best known anti-nuclearist reference point, and widely cited critique of deterrence.[136] Kubrick, in parodying deterrence, but staying within its logic, captured the worst fears of the anti-nuclear movement. In the film the Soviet Union secretly develops and activates a device they believe provides the ultimate deterrent: a "Doomsday machine".[137] To be triggered automatically upon any nuclear attack on the Soviet Union, The Doomsday Machine's activation guarantees total global nuclear apocalypse. The Soviets believe they have created the perfect deterrent that made any attack on them 100 per cent irrational. However, while flawless in theory, the Doomsday Device was undone by human, bureaucratic and technological fallibility on both sides.[138] The Soviet military kept the device a secret in order to unveil it at politically opportune moment, thus eliminating its deterrent effect, which relied upon the enemy being party to it.[139] Thus, ignorant of the Doomsday machine, an American general, brainwashed by the anti-Soviet union propaganda, goes rogue, exploiting his power and the flaws in the system of safety checks and balances, launches an unprovoked, unauthorised nuclear attack on the Soviet Union. At this point, those same checks and balances also hamper the efforts to reverse the attack; the order to launch includes an order to scramble the radio lest the enemy attempt to sabotage the attack. Meanwhile, the only one with the necessary code is the rogue general, who has now barricaded himself into his military base and ordered his regiment to attack anyone – even US soldiers – who might attack. Ultimately, the world's fate rests on the last bomber that, in scraping through

[136] Although academia typically considers popular culture irrelevant, a growing literature that recognise that pop-culture can have significance in shaping the public discourse on war (Behnke & de Carvalho, 2006; de Carvalho, 2006; Hansen, 2006). Behnke and de Carvalho (2006, p. 935) are especially bullish: "Thus, the argument in the present exchange is not about whether popular culture is relevant to IR, but about how it is relevant, and how it shapes discourses about international politics. Indeed, in the case of Dr Strangelove, there is evidence to suggest it has grown in social significance and continues to carry cultural resonance today." Type "Rd. Strangelove" into Google and it returns more than 633,000 hits, at the time of writing. Meanwhile, Google's Ngram view which measures the frequency words appear in books published in the United States in Googles digitized library provides another (imperfect) indication of how widely Strangelove – and the anti-nuclearist discourse it embodies – is embedded in culture. According to the N-gram viewer the frequency the term "Dr. Strangelove" has appeared more frequently in books than "Spiderman", "Superman", and "Count Dracula" and remains on an upward trend (See Appendix 2). Indeed, "Dr Strangelove" was referenced in the UK parliament debate about Trident in 2007 to attack the pro-nuclearists; it did not require any explanation on the part of the MP what he meant (HC Deb 14 Mar 2007 Vol 468 cc 373)

[137] An idea that Szilard, one of the nuclear scientists involved in the Manhattan Project, is reported to have floated. Adler's(1992, p. 120) analysis of the epistemic communities of arms control notes that Szilard suggested the idea of "a doomsday machine" in conversation with Herman Kahn in 1949 but oddly does not note that it seemed to have inspired Dr Strangelove.

[138] President Merklin Muffley: "General Turgidson! When you instituted the human reliability tests, you *assured* me there was *no* possibility of such a thing *ever* occurring!
General "Buck" Turgidson: Well, I, uh, don't think it's quite fair to condemn a whole program because of a single slip-up, sir."

[139] Dr. Strangelove: Of course, the whole point of a Doomsday Machine is lost, if you *keep* it a *secret*! Why didn't you tell the world, EH?
"Ambassador de Sadesky: It was to be announced at the Party Congress on Monday. As you know, the Premier loves surprises."

Soviet defences, continues to limp towards their target, rapidly leaking fuel on what is now a suicide mission. However, in an extraordinary feat of patriotism, they make it and the Captain releases himself and the nuclear bomb, unwittingly triggering the doomsday device in the process. The end of the world ensues.[140]

In addition to theorizing why and how deterrence can go wrong, and providing evidence of when it has gone wrong, the anti nuclearists provide vivid descriptions of what a nuclear war would mean. Since Nagasaki and Hiroshima, nuclear weapons have never been used in anger, however their firepower has increased exponentially. Therefore, the anti-nuclear weapons discourse does a lot of predicting, modelling and imagining of nuclear war. Carl Sagan (1983) *'Nuclear Winter: Global Consequences of Multiple Nuclear Explosions* models the consequence of what would happen in the event of a nuclear exchange. Capturing the public imagination, according to the *New York Times*, when published it "spawned a host of movies, plays and books predicated on the nuclear winter hypothesis". The term nuclear winter has now become embedded in popular discourse as a "conventional metaphor" meaning a catastrophe of some sort (Ausmus, 1998). Indeed in the last decade, *Time Magazine* (Beech, 2014) compared Beijing smog to nuclear winter*, The New Yorker*, compared Basketball's strike to a "nuclear winter",[141] and the metaphor has even been used to describe the problem of low bond yields(Cohen & Malburg, 2011). These are just illustrations, but the imagining(s) of what a nuclear war may involve runs deep into popular discourse. Wikipedia, for example, lists more than 100 "nuclear apocalypse" films, although the number is probably much greater.[142]

In summary, anti-nuclearism discourse involves showing how nuclear accidents have happened, imagining how nuclear war could happen, and describing – or they would say revealing - in vivid detail what nuclear war would mean. Thus if the nuclearist discourse produces nuclear

[140] A more recent example, one that name checks Dr Strangelove, is Joseph Heller's (1994) lesser-known follow-up to *Catch 22*: *Closing Time* satirizes the nuclear security culture of the United States. Heller's novel tells the story of politicians, military men, and weapons manufacturers, whose combination of high-technology, massive funding, and warped logic leaves them cut off from the world around them as they construct ever more powerful nuclear weapons. In particular, Heller takes aim at the modelling of nuclear war, which the (simpleton) president of the United States understands as computer games. At the end of the novel, while president is playing his "games", he accidently releases all the US's nuclear missiles. When his staff find him, panic sets in, and they order him hurry to the Shelters known as "Triage". The President replies "sure I know that one I was playing that one before I switched to this one" (Heller, 1994; 530). The president still does not grasp that the nuclear games he has been playing affect the world around him. As with Dr Strangelove, the end of the world ensues.

[141] See "Basketball's Nuclear Winter," (2011)

[142] Recognising that using Wikipedia is taboo this thesis offers a twofold defence 1) the precise number of nuclear holocaust films does not matter as much as the main point that many exist, 2) Wikipedia is not as inaccurate as is commonly assumed. A randomized study conducted by Nature Journal (Giles, 2005) found Wikipedia's accuracy to be similar to Britannica Encyclopaedia.

management strategies, seeks to demonstrate their effectiveness, and downplays the dangers of nuclear weapons, the anti-nuclearist discourse seeks to show why these management strategies are not working, are dangerous, and why they are not worth the risk. However, although the anti-nuclearist discourse represents total nuclear abolition as urgent, it does not necessarily offer a plan for how this can be realised without risking leaving one state with a nuclear monopoly and victim to coercion (Wohlstetter, 1961).[143] The next section analyses why both discourses are unlikely to achieve hegemonic status in the near future.

The Nuclear Debate: It Will Only End When *It Ends*

The two nuclear discourses sketched above are sustained in parallel, yet remain in permanent conflict. Taken individually they provide coherent discursive formations around nuclear weapons, as Hugh Gusterson (1998, p. 3) puts it: "the nuclearist and antinuclear worldviews are both plausible constructions of the world that are unable to defeat one another". Both share the inter-subjective understanding of the awesome destructiveness of nuclear weapons, but they then diverge dramatically into two irreconcilable and fabulously textual discursive formations.[144] As Morgan (2011, p. 140) observes, the unique thing about nuclear deterrence during the Cold War was that it: "pursued intently and with grave purpose despite the absence of a clear way to ascertain when and how it worked, was actually necessary and had an effect". While it was not Morgen's analytical focus, these uncertainties in policy effects produce a potentially endless potential for contestation and a broad bandwidth of possible representations of nuclear weapons' utility. The following section outlines how these two discourses constrain and enable governments (for example the UK's) looking to represent their nuclear weapons policy as legitimate and desirable.

1) The Nuclear Deterrence Paradox and Transcendental Utility

Put simply, deterrence works by "convincing a potential enemy by the threat of force that he is better off if he does *not* use military force against you." (Kenny, 1985, p. 53) Hence scholars have suggested nuclear deterrence is built on a paradox. Nuclear weapons are reputed to work by *not* being used, if they are ever used they can be said to have failed (Lewis, 2006). However, one cannot prove a negative. Thus, considering the international systems' complexity, and the impossibility of conducting deterrence experiments, nuclear deterrence and its reported effects will always be *transcendental*: beyond the means of the nuclearists and anti-nuclearists to pin

[143] Wohlstetter (1961) argues anti nuclearism "exhibits the weakest and most inconsistent form of the dogma about the automatic balance by failing to recognize that unilateral nuclear disarmament would insure the aggressor against retaliation"

[144] Derrida first coined this expression in 1984 to describe the space in which nuclear war is discussed: one unsullied, 1945 aside, by physical empirics.

down. This has been noted before, but rarely its implications for how much flexibility it gives nuclear policy makers looking to maintain their nuclear policy.

One might initially assume this would provide an advantage to the anti-nuclearists, but the anti-nuclear cannot prove that nuclear weapons have *not* deterred the various enemies others constituted in foreign policy discourses: whether it is the Soviets, North Korea, or for that matter —to paraphrase Richard Dawkins —the giant spaghetti monster in the sky. Indeed, because the stakes – nuclear war – are so high the burden to prove the unprovable often sits with anti-nuclearists.[145] Hypothetically, the list of what a state's nuclear weapons can be said to deter, have deterred, or will be needed to deter, can be as long as one's imagination. This feature of nuclear deterrence grants nuclear weapons armed states flexibility in discursively producing utility for their nuclear weapons that few other policies—which are typically measured by positive outcomes—can rival. The next chapters will argue that this flexible transcendental quality of nuclear deterrence proved invaluable for the UK when representing the utility of nuclear weapons in the past, and when it sought to fill the vacuum in their nuclear rationale left by the collapse of the Soviet Union.

2) The Nuclear Peace Correlation

The nuclear paradox produces nuclear peace correlations that nuclearists can plausibly represent as evidence of deterrence working, and anti-nuclearists can plausibly represent as spurious. Although other nuclear correlations exist, the most common correlation articulated in within the nuclearist discourse is the "long nuclear peace"[146] enjoyed by Europe, specifically the absence of war between the West and the Soviet Union. Nuclearists represent this period as evidence for nuclear weapons exceptional peace bringing qualities. However, the nuclear peace correlations link to nuclear weapons is so weak that the same empirics can sustain the opposite claim, for instance Muller (1988, 1998) argues nuclear weapons have been "irrelevant" to peace in Europe. Because nuclear weapons work by not being used, the argument remains stuck in the metaphysical space and is thus unprovable, even by those who believe things can be proved.[147] As with the utility of nuclear weapons, investigating how the UK represents this nuclear peace correlation to its public can provide insight into how the UK maintains the belief that its nuclear weapons are legitimate and desirable

[145] The burden of proof is on the nuclearists in NNWS – this may help explain why proliferation has been much slower than many nuclearists predicted.
[146] Toner (1987, p. 68) uses these precise words, but the same idea can be found in Waltz 1981 (see above), Mearsheimer (1990), among numerous others
[147] Lawrence Freedman the UK's most prominent deterrence scholar understates it when he calls the problem of proving deterrence "extremely challenging" (see Freedman, 2004).

3) Debating the Risk of Nuclear War

The debate over the risks of maintaining nuclear weapons are as likely to last as long as the debate surrounding the effects of nuclear deterrence. Indeed, because the argument has no time limit, Booth and Wheeler can also contend that the "familiar refrain" of nuclear weapons working is misleading, it would be more accurate to say they have not failed yet (Booth & Wheeler, 1992, p. 26). Derrida (1984) noted that this debate can continue indefinitely, and will only be resolved when nuclear war breaks out. This would count as a "win" for the anti-nuclearists, but would likely mean there was no-one left around to comment. However, while the debate will not be settled until a nuclear war breaks out, what a state can do, to frame its nuclear weapons as safe, is downplay the risk of nuclear accidents to the public. Again, as the next section will illustrate, how the UK governments' discourse marginalizes that anti-nuclearist challenge by representing the UK's nuclear weapons as safe and manageable.

International Nuclear Policy: Compromising Utopia

Critically, both nuclearist and anti-nuclearist discourses form coherent representations of nuclear weapons - their effects, and the suggested policy - in which the identity of the possessor is largely irrelevant. This equality of nuclearist discourse is illustrated quite nicely by deterrence theorists' habit of referring to nuclear states as "[state] A" and [state] B" (Freedman, 2004). Waltz and neo-realists have long argued that the identity of state's matters little to predicting state behaviour, and this assumption leads them to feel sanguine about nuclear deterrence whether it's a democracy or dictator. Meanwhile, the anti-nuclearist discourse, which represents nuclear weapons as always dangerous no matter the identity of the possessor, is also non-discriminatory but in the other direction: neither dictators nor democracies can be trusted with nuclear weapon. Thus, both discourses generate legitimacy for their policy prescriptions, benefiting from common norms in the international of equality between people (institutionalised in Human Rights) and between sovereign states (UN Charter). If one disrupts these discourses by suggesting disarmament for some, proliferation for others, they therefore need a legitimising principle to override the apparent fairness in proposing either 1) nuclear weapons for everyone, or 2) nuclear weapons for no-one.

Therefore, nuclearist and anti-nuclearist discourses could *both* be considered utopian and this may help explain why their policy prescriptions of disarmament and proliferation are poorly reflected in the *international.* Both discourses implicitly take world peace as their goal, rather than state interest. The neo-realists suggestion of world stability through nuclear weapons may be militaristic and thus not something typically associated with utopianism, but by ignoring how

states stand to have their relative power and freedom to act impeded by proliferation, they ignore their own neo-realist theory of how rational states should behave. Meanwhile, anti-nuclearist discourse ignores the opposite problem; how states perceive that unilaterally giving up their nuclear weapons would reduce their absolute and relative power, and imperil their security (Wohlstetter, 1961). So, while taken in isolation the anti-nuclearist and nuclearist discourses provide relatively coherent discursive formations and policy suggestions (Gusterson, 1999b), it is perhaps not surprising that the NWS typically draw from *both* discourses when seeking to make nuclear policy "in the national interest". Instead the NWS tend to present a nuclear policy that represents their maintenance of nuclear weapons as peaceful, manageable, necessary, and thus legitimate, while representing the proliferation of nuclear weapons to other countries as threatening, unmanageable, and unnecessary, and thus illegitimate. This sort of discriminatory policy requires alternative logics of legitimation.

However, while neo-realism -come Realpolitik - can probably explain the NWS anti-proliferation strategy, it does not offer an amenable foreign policy representation.[148] Gusterson(1999b, p. 140), in imagining what bare Realpolitik might sound like, demonstrates why: "the candid declaration that, while nuclear weapons may be no more dangerous in the hands of Muslims or Hindus than in those of Christians, they are a prerogative of power, and the powerful have no intention of allowing the powerless to acquire them". It is fair to assume that such representation of nuclear policy would not play well diplomatically. Instead, nuclear armed states have historically performed variations on non-proliferation -disarmament compromise: pursuing anti-proliferation policies, while making vague non-committal disarmament gestures; making nuclear weapons central to their national security doctrines, but also articulating the grave dangers nuclear weapons represent to the world.[149] This contradictory policy has been institutionalised in numerous international treaties, most notably the NPT,[150] while the NWS

[148] States, according to Waltz and his neo-realist disciples, if behaving "rationally" seek to maximise their relative power in the international. Therefore, while the spread of nuclear weapons may bring to peace to the world, they will do so at the cost of relative power of the existing nuclear weapons states to undertake military action against previously non-nuclear states. Meanwhile, the anti-nuclear discourse policy prescription of abolishing nuclear weapons is vulnerable to the same neo-realist critique which is compounded by the undecidability of the nuclear peace correlation: nobody can prove if the nuclear weapons have been necessary or will be necessary to peace, so giving them up would require a leap of faith involving the highest stakes possible. Perhaps unsurprisingly neither policy prescription has proved popular in practice.

[149] This compromise has been institutionalised in the Non-Proliferation Treaty's "Grand Bargain" that permits 5 countries – US, Russia, UK, France and China to possess nuclear weapons on the condition that they: 'pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament'. For their part, the non-nuclear weapons states (NNWS) gained access to the benefits of civilian nuclear technology, on the condition they refrain from developing nuclear weapons and submit to inspections from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

[150] All nuclear treaties recognize and thus constitute nuclear weapons as a problem states have a responsibility to address. These treaties set up bureaucracies that work continually to constitute and engage in policies and

routinely employ oppositional discursive representations of nuclear weapons in the same policy text[151].

This *habitus* gives nuclear weapon armed states what Medhurst (Cited in Taylor, 1998) calls a "Schizophrenic nuclear personae"[152] and (re)produces instability in the NWS nuclear discourse. Booth's (2006, p. 83) conclusions on the tension between Britain's anti-proliferation policy and its maintenance of its nuclear weapons highlights the instability succinctly, "if history shows that nuclear deterrence was the cause of the 'long peace' since 1945, should we not help disseminate nuclear capabilities globally, in order to spread their peaceful properties?" This thesis contends NWS states' reproduction of rival discourses and the hypocritical practices they lead to is both symptomatic of, and responsible for, the difficulties they have representing their nuclear weapons policies as legitimate and desirable to their domestic and international audiences.[153] How the UK government, from Thatcher to Blair, has managed to successfully overcome these instabilities one of the central puzzles of this thesis addresses, and something which my flexible definition of legitimacy should prove useful to analyse (chapter 5 & 6).

Indeed, the standard justifications for the NWS unstable policy representations create new instabilities. First, theoretically, "the N+1 problem", often alluded to by nuclear armed states, might offer a way out: that each additional state that acquires nuclear weapons necessarily increases the risk of nuclear war breaking out (Berkowitz, 1985; Wohlstetter, 1961). While this stabilises the non-proliferation policy to some extent, it still leaves the question of why the existing "N-countries" should be permitted the benefits of nuclear weapons, and a +1 country should not. It also destabilises the NWS representation that their own nuclear weapons can be safely managed. The NPT can be seen as an institutional solution to this legitimacy problem. It draws an arbitrary temporal line that grants states that exploded a nuclear weapon before 1967

practices directed at the nuclear weapons problem. The NPT is the most comprehensive of the Treaties in terms of its ambitions (it seeks to abolish, contain, monitor, and manage the nuclear weapons problem, while also facilitate the spread of nuclear technology) and the most widely accepted, ratified by 187 states. The NPT has generated a vast and dense institutional structure, including preparatory conferences that proceed in the three years prior to review conferences undertaken every 5 years, which over arches a plethora of other independent but connected institutions that conspire to further the NPT's stated goal of tackling the nuclear weapons problem.

[151] For example, UK nuclear weapon policy documents represent the UK's nuclear weapons as having played a vital role in maintaining UK security, yet represent other states nuclear weapons as a threat to peace.

[152] Medhurst (1994) first coined this expression. Most commonly though, the nuclear weapons states foreign policy is more commonly described as merely hypocritical

[153] This also provides another reason why NWS will probably never fully silence or marginalize the anti-nuclearist discourse, in part, because they mobilize the key representation of nuclear weapons as inherently dangerous and unmanageable, whenever they pursue anti-proliferation policies. Moreover, most NNWS states have little interest in neither promoting the utility of nuclear weapons, nor sanitizing nuclear weapons. Indeed, in most NNWS countries the anti-nuclearist discourse dominates in the absence of a powerful state discourse marginalizing it. .

status as a Nuclear Weapons State. The treaty permits the NWS to possess nuclear weapons on the condition that they 'pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament[…]"(NPT, 1967). For their part, the non-nuclear weapons states (NNWS) gained access to the benefits of civilian nuclear technology on the condition they refrain from developing nuclear weapons and submit to inspections from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

However, although the Cold War muted calls for the disarmament end of the "Grand Bargain" to be enforced, since the 1990s the NNWS have grown increasingly impatient with the NWS (See for example, The New Agenda Coalition, 1998). Indeed, recent NPT Review have been characterised by a stand-off between NWS demands for stricter anti-proliferation measures, and the NNWS demands for disarmament (Nye, 1985; Ritchie, 2008, 2012). ElBaradei (2009), the head of the IAEA reflected the majority of NNWS's frustrations when he argued that the NWS states claims "that nuclear weapons are essential for their security… robs them of the moral authority to persuade others not to acquire nuclear weapons…" In an Op-Ed in *The Washington Post*, ElBaradei (2006) constitutes the NPT grand bargain as temporary "under the NPT, there is no such thing as a "legitimate" or "illegitimate" nuclear weapons state. The fact that five states are recognized in the treaty as holders of nuclear weapons was regarded as a matter of transition; the treaty does not in any sense confer permanent status on those states as weapons holders". While the NPT's disarmament obligations are famously loose and can sustain a range of interpretations (including the NWS's gentle readings), enforcing new anti-proliferation measures requires the consensus among its signators.[154] Therefore, the UK's broader nuclear weapons policy in the 1990s, including maintenance *and* anti-proliferation, still needs to represent its nuclear weapons policy as legitimate to those in the international audience critical of the NWS lack of disarmament and reluctant to accept further anti-proliferation measures.[155] Even domestically, opponents in the UK's domestic audience regularly accuse the UK government of hypocrisy on its nuclear weapons policy.[156] The NPT is an important discursive resource that helps the UK stabilise its nuclear weapons policy, and the next chapters will analyse how the UK mobilises the NPT to represent its nuclear weapons

[154] In short: the NWS interpretation of their NPT obligations can be summarised as they only have to *try* to disarm *together*.
[155] In particular the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) which have collectively opposed new anti-proliferation measures, but also various medium powers from the West have expressed dissatisfaction with the NWS disarmament efforts (Ritchie, 2012)
[156] For example in a *Times* editorial in 2006 "Is a new nuclear deterrent vital to Britain's national security - or is it hypocritical to enhance our nuclear arsenal while asking countries like Iran not to become nuclear states?" (The Times, 2006)

policy as legitimate and desirable. However, understanding how the UK stabilises its policy requires more than analysis of the UK's representation of the NPT.

Stabilising International Nuclear Policy Discourse

The identity/foreign policy nexus should prove insightful on how UK governments have stabilised its nuclear weapons policy. Hansen's nexus provides an excellent frame for analysing how identity constructions permit policy actions; something which will prove useful for understanding the UK's nuclear weapons policy. Indeed, an eclectic range of scholars, (Gusterson, 1999; Krause & Latham, 1998; Sagan & Waltz, 1995) have suggested that the West's nuclear weapons discourse stabilises its nuclear policy through ethnocentrism. They argue that through mobilising ancient Oriental discourse that constitutes non-Western Others as "irrational" "dangerous" and "impervious to reason" allows them to conjure away, and take for granted their perception of the legitimacy of their anti-proliferation policy and the maintenance of their own nuclear weapons (Krause & Latham, 1998, p. 40). As the next chapters will demonstrate, the UK's constitution of orientalist tinged Self/Other dichotomies are certainly important, however the UK's stabilisation of its discourse is more complex. Looking beyond Hansen and Gusterson's emphasis on identity, this thesis also argues that part of the answer comes from how the UK discourse exploits the transcendental qualities of nuclear deterrence, mobilizes the nuclear peace correlation, and how the UK's nuclear weapons themselves are represented. These features of the UK's regime of truth can be comfortably implanted into Hansen's nexus however, as Chapter 2 argued, they are under theorized within "Security as Practice" itself.

This chapter also showed how the nuclearist and anti-nuclearist discourses constitute different global nuclear weapons problems. Hansen (2006) argues that all governments express some form of ethical responsibility towards global problems.[157] Similar to global warming, global poverty, aids, and terrorism discourses, nuclear weapons discourse produces *a global nuclear weapons problem* that demands governments perform a foreign policy that articulates their ethical responsibility towards the problem, and thus perform an appropriate policy that fits with it. The NPT's preamble provides both a textbook example of the how the world's treaties constitutes nuclear weapons as a problem mankind must seek to solve (or at least manage):

[157] Global warming is constituted as a global problem which necessitates governments to articulate their relationship to the problem and formulate a suitable response. For example, a government may reject that global warming is a manmade problem, deny any ethical responsibility for it and therefore refuse to participate in environmental treaties or undertake measures to reduce CO2 emissions. Alternatively, they may accept global warming, joint ethical responsibility for global warming and thus join treaties and pursue policies to reduce emissions.

"Considering the devastation that would be visited upon all mankind by a nuclear war and the consequent need to make every effort to avert the danger of such a war and to take the measures to safeguard the security of peoples". Most other nuclear weapons treaties feature similar statements acknowledging the need to address the nuclear problem in some way[158]. However, how that problem is constituted in a national and international discourse – whether disinventable, manageable, solvable; whether it is the state's responsibility or the various Others, whether the nuclear problem is low priority or high priority and so on – implies different ethical responsibilities for the problem, and thus alters the bandwidth of possible policies a state can follow. Again, the next chapters will analyse how the UK's discourse changing constitution of the global nuclear problem has affected the bandwidth its possible nuclear policies.

Conclusion: Transcendental Utility, the Nuclear Peace Correlation, and the Legitimacy Deficit

This chapter has sketched the international discourses that have emerged with the nuclear era and shown how they produce problems and opportunities for foreign policy makers. In particular, three take-away points outlined above inform the following chapter's analysis of UK's nuclear weapons policy. First, I argued that nuclear deterrence can only offer *transcendental* utility: because nuclear weapons are represented to work by not being used, contemporary science cannot prove (nor claim to have proved) what effects they have. Therefore, rather than asking whether this utility is real or not, this thesis analyses how the UK has represented the transcendental utility of its nuclear weapons. In particular, the chapters investigate how the UK has discursively solidified a "nuclear peace [correlation]" in its domestic discourse. Second, the next chapters investigate how this transcendental utility can also provide a peculiar degree of flexibility in representing the effects of nuclear weapons policy, and how the UK has taken advantage of this when legitimising its nuclear weapons maintenance. Third, above I argued that the nuclearist and anti-nuclearist discourses both offer internally stable and legitimate policy prescriptions for nuclear weapons. However, because international policy and practice (of the NWS and international institutions) typically borrows from both - promoting disarmament and anti-proliferation, while simultaneously representing nuclear weapons as necessary to their security – they have embedded instability that requires additional legitimising logics to overcome. Therefore the following chapters investigate the extent of the UK's nuclear weapons foreign policy legitimacy problem, and how the governments have produced supplementary stabilising representations that help overcome it.

[158] See Tannenwald (2005) for a more in depth analysis of how the nuclear weapons problem has been institutionalised globally, in UN resolutions, the Conference on disarmament, and in nuclear weapons treaties.

Chapter 5

Thatcher's Nuclear Regime of Truth

If you walked into a nuclear missile showroom you would buy Trident - it's lovely, it's elegant, it's beautiful. It is quite simply the best. And Britain should have the best. In the world of the nuclear missile it is the Saville Row suit, the Rolls Royce Corniche, the Château Lafitte 1945. It is the nuclear missile Harrods would sell you. What more can I say?

- Sir Humphrey Appleby, "*Grand Designs"* an episode of the BBC series *Yes Prime Minister,* 1986

Before analysing how the Thatcher government produced nuclear discourse that enabled the acquisition of the Trident nuclear weapons system, it is necessary to outline the key events in the period, and how the Labour opposition contested Thatcher's nuclear policy. Due to space constraints I will paint with broad strokes rather than provide an exhaustive description of the domestic and international context. However, considering that texts analysed were aimed at the British public and international audiences, who could not have been expected to be experts in international politics (or Sovietologists), and considering the disagreements focused on big ideas rather than details, a concise account should suffice.

The Political Context

When Thatcher's government was elected to power in 1979 the UK had already been a nuclear weapons state for 27 years. Due to the long procurement time, the question of replacing the UK's existing strategic submarine nuclear weapons system, Polaris, was looming. In fact, Labour had already begun privately preparing a deal with the US for Trident before Thatcher's government entered office.[159] Indeed, Labour had long been divided over nuclear weapons, and many leading members of the party favoured maintaining a nuclear deterrent of some kind, if not necessarily acquiring Trident (Lilleker, 2000; Scott, 2006). Thus, when Thatcher announced her decision to purchase Trident from the US on July 15 1980, Labour had not yet determined their party's position. However, the anti-nuclear movement mobilized the sense of a dangerous escalating East-West arms race, the release in January 1980 of hitherto hidden one billion

[159] James Callaghan left a private memo for Thatcher on her first day in office outlining the progress of the negotiations for Trident (Hennessy, 2007.p.323)

pound cost of upgrading Polaris's missiles (Stoddart, 2008), the acquisition of Trident and the decision to accept US Pershing cruise missiles on British territory, to successfully constitute an urgent *nuclear weapons problem* in the foreground of British politics (Scott, 2006).[160] Nonetheless, it was only when the Labour Party Conference of 1982 voted to make opposition to nuclear weapons part of Labour's programme that the leadership formalised an anti-nuclear position (Scott, 2012, p. 119).

Following the party decision, Labour fought both the 1983 and 1987 elections with manifestos which promised to cancel Trident and remove all nuclear weapons from the UK.[161] Both manifestos represent the nuclear arms race, rather than the Soviet Union, as the main threat to the UK.[162] Neither manifesto directly represents the Soviet Union as an immediate security threat, and instead appear to attribute blame for the "tension" between the East and the West equally.[163] In both elections Labour argued that moving to non-nuclear security would and could prompt other nuclear countries to follow their lead.[164] Critically, both manifestos represented non-nuclear conventional arms as capable of providing the UK's security needs, and that therefore nuclear security was a costly and dangerous waste of resources.[165] Indeed,

[160] In 1983, an IPSOS MORI poll indicated that the percentage of British people who named "disarmament of nuclear weapons" as the "the most important issue facing Britain today" reached 41% in 1983 (Gray, 2001, p. 238).

[161] Labour planned to decommission the Polaris submarines (SSBNs), cancel the Trident SSBN, and remove all US owned nuclear weapons stationed in Britain (Scott, 2012).

[162] 1983 Manifesto (The Labour Party, 1983): "What we do propose to do is to get rid of the nuclear boomerangs which offer no genuine protection to our people but, first and foremost, to help stop the nuclear arms race which is the most dangerous threat to us all." The 1987 manifesto (Labour Party, 1987) is more ambiguous but the message is similar; the threat of nuclear war is the problem rather than specifically the Soviet Union: "Labour has always linked necessary defence with the need to reduce hostility between East and West. We must be alert in protecting our country and equally alert in helping to keep away the scourge of war and nuclear destruction." It should be noted that the 1983 manifesto uses especially graphic language, for example it suggested the UK faced "the nuclear abyss" or a "nuclear holocaust", while nuclear deterrence was a "a logic which would intensify the race and destroy the universe".

[163] For example, the 1987 manifesto states: "We uphold the principle that it is wrong for one country to dominate or threaten another. We **oppose the Soviet presence in Afghanistan.** We oppose **United States intervention in Nicaragua and the financing and arming of the Contra terrorists.**" (Original Emphasis)

[164]1983 manifesto: "We must use unilateral steps taken by Britain to secure multilateral solutions on the international level". 1987 manifesto: "We have always recognised that a **properly negotiated and monitored international agreement to remove nuclear weapons** from European soil would provide the most effective guarantee against the horrors of nuclear war. It would be the most significant step towards an eventual worldwide renunciation of, and ban upon, nuclear weapons."(Original Emphasis) For a more thorough explication of Labour's position which they articulated in more depth following the 1983 election, see Denis Healey (1986) the shadow defence minister's article in Foreign Affairs "Labour, NATO and the Bomb" and "Defence and Security for Britain", Labour's National Committee's statement to the Labour Party Conference (1984)

[165] 1983 manifesto: "This will mean maintaining adequate conventional forces, at present threatened by the extravagant expenditure on Trident." In 1987 Trident's cost of up to £10 billion will take up so much of our defence budget as to deny modern and necessary equipment to our front line forces…We will cancel Trident and use the money saved to pay for those **improvements for our army, navy and air force** which are vital for the defence of our country and to fulfil our role in NATO." [original emphasis]

both manifestos represent Thatcher's nuclear policy as fuelling the nuclear problem and worsening the threat of nuclear war. Thus, for Labour the UK's nuclear weapons threatened UK security and wasted money, while they constituted *the nuclear problem* facing the world as solvable and that the UK had the ethical responsibility to address it through nuclear disarmament.

However, Labour's opposition to nuclear weapons jarred with the UK's political performative architecture, and the foreign policy performances of its NATO allies.[166] The UK had maintained nuclear forces since 1952, the Soviet Union had featured as the enemy Other of the UK's foreign policy for at least as long, deterrence theorizing and arms control were established academic fields, and the UK had been a founding member of an alliance that had had a stated reliance upon nuclear deterrence for decades. Further, while a significant number of the public were sceptical about Trident, Labour's specific policy of total nuclear disarmament had never polled at more than 30% during the Cold War nuclear era (Byrom, 2007, p. 72). To compound matters**,** while the Labour leadership hoped to win the debate, Thatcher could count on the support of a broadly pro nuclear press: *The Sun; The Times, The Express, The Mail* all wrote editorials strongly endorsing the purchase of Trident.[167] Moreover, as the next section will show, the Soviet Union's military operations in Afghanistan that began in 1979 and continued throughout the 1980s provided new material for Thatcher's Cold War representations of the Soviet threat that were echoed by the UK's NATO allies.

However, this is not to say that either Thatcher's election victory or the successful maintenance of public support for nuclear weapons was inevitable. The Thatcher government's economic policies and the UK's economic problems in the early 1980s made the government potentially vulnerable. Indeed, Thatcher's cuts to public spending coincided with (or arguably led to) a recession that saw unemployment hit 3m in 1982 peaking in 1984 at 3.3m, a level unprecedented in the post WW II period. Thus the government's decision to spend £5 billion (eventually rising to 9.5billion) on Trident, in one sense became an obvious opportunity for Labour to attempt to make political hay (Freedman, 1999, p. 131). Moreover, Labour could count on vocal and visible grassroots support from the anti-nuclear movement.[168] Meanwhile

[166] For example Scott (2012, p. 118) writes "Labour's approach to nuclear disarmament was pilloried by the media and drew hostile public reactions from within NATO and from the Reagan administration."
[167] *The Times* ("The Papers", 1982) quotes several papers, only *The Mirror* opposed nuclear weapons. Notably, *The Sun* – the paper with the largest readership - came out strongly in favour of the decision reproducing the security logic of legitimacy Thatcher performed in her speeches (see below): "the price of security as a nation must come before everything else. The price of freedom must be paid".
[168] The CND had a membership of more than 100,000("Whatever happened to CND?," 2006) and was capable of pulling 250,000 for marches against nuclear weapons ("1981," 1981), while the Church of England also

the nuclear arms race did worry the British public even if many might have remained unconvinced by Labour's alternative policy solutions.[169] Additionally, whether or not Labour could exploit the costs of Trident and public concern with the arms race, to win the nuclear debate, they may have been able to exploit the UK's economic problems to win the election anyway. Therefore, the extent to which winning or losing the debate over Britain's nuclear future mattered only to the extent that it helped or hindered their chances of winning in an election that also contested a smorgasbord of other important intertwined issues.[170] Indeed, both political parties displayed the ideological vim to push forward unpopular policies.[171] It is therefore reasonable to believe that both would have been willing to force through a nuclear policy opposed by the public if they had won the election.

Therefore, the following analysis must come with the large caveat that the enforceability of UK's nuclear foreign policy was not as dependent as most short term foreign policies on the success of convincing the public the policy was legitimate and desirable. Nonetheless, the British public did have the opportunity to vote for a party that stood for nuclear disarmament.[172] Therefore, the Conservatives under Thatcher's had to provide a sufficiently compelling, legitimate, and desirable nuclear policy *not* to lose two elections fought at least in part over the nuclear issue. This chapter analyses how Thatcher drew from the discursive economy to successfully defend the maintenance of the UK's nuclear weapons and marginalise Labour's alternative nuclear foreign policy.

Thatcher's Nuclear Regime of Truth

Maggie Mort (2002) in *Building the Trident Network* likened the process of building, maintaining, and renewing the UK's nuclear weapons systems to an iceberg because the vast majority of the process is hidden from view (and, I suspect she intended to imply, ominously, and dangerously hidden from view). This is an apt analogy for Trident; and Mort's book sets about meticulously documenting the hidden discourses of the dockyards: narratives, production

publicly opposed the UK's possession of nuclear weapons, writing a widely debated report (Baker, 1982; Raj, 1983) in 1982 that Thatcher responded to in parliament.

[169] According to an opinion poll in November 1980 42 per cent of the public believed nuclear war was likely within the next ten years, and 65 per cent felt it more likely than the year before (Freedman, 1999, p. 120).

[170] Among them, their economic policies, Thatcher's handling of the Falklands war and Labour's policy of withdrawing from the EEC contributed significantly to the Labour's election defeat. .

[171]: Labour's decision to pursue a policy that polled badly on the presumption that they could win the argument, was testament to their privileging of idealism over pragmatism (particularly in 1983) that in the context of 21st century focus group led politics seems anachronistic. Indeed, in the year before they adopted the unilateralist policy an opinion poll suggested 69per cent opposed the policy (Times, 15 Nov, 1981)

[172] As noted in the literature review, the Labour party hierarchy has been considered to have drawn a firmer conclusion: that nuclear disarmament was a vote loser, and remains so today. See Lilleker (2000) and Scott (2006) for a more thorough discussion of the evidence for this view.

dilemmas and controversies that had long been forgotten or silenced without scratching the mainstream political discourse. Similarly, the accidents, errors, and near misses that happened during the Cold War in the UK are only now gradually appearing.[173] Had the underside of the iceberg been visible to the public during Thatcher's government's reign, then the discourse would have surely looked very different. However, although nuclear weapons discourse is indeed "fabulously textual" it certainly cannot be considered a perfect description. Thus in taking government discourse as my object of analysis, I must forgo analysis of what the government did not talk about. Rather, this thesis asks how the UK government under Thatcher presented a reality that justified the maintenance of the UK's nuclear weapons, not whether this reality was accurate.

Building upon Foucault, I have labelled this section Thatcher's Nuclear Regime of Truth in order to emphasise this thesis' assumption that the world depicted is only one construction of the reality. A regime of anything, after all, is not a natural occurrence. The following analyses how the UK's government (re)produced a nuclear regime of truth that represented the purchase of Trident as legitimate and desirable. The analysis, based around Hansen's foreign policy/identity nexus, will be structured as follows: first it outlines the UK's constitution of the nuclear weapons problem and how that framed the UK's representation of nuclear weapon possession, disarmament and proliferation. Next it analyses the representations of the main Other in the nuclear discourse: the Soviet Union. It then turns to the representations of the UK Self found in the nuclear discourse. Finally, it addresses the representations of the policy link between the these representations of the Self and Other. The final part of this chapter will put it all back together again and analyse Thatcher's Nuclear Regime of Truth holistically.

The Nuclear Weapons Problem: Disinventable but Manageable

Thatcher's government produced and reproduced the "nuclearist" (Chapter 4) representation of the nuclear weapons problem as disinventable, which thus narrowed the bandwidth of policy options constituted as viable. As the last section suggested, if the nuclear weapon problem is represented as timeless then it implies prudent governments must focus on managing the problem through deterrence and arms control rather than seeking to solve the problem through abolition. Thatcher explains the UK and the world's nuclear predicament thusly: "Powerful modern weapons and nuclear technology will never again allow us to live in so secure a world.

[173] Eric Schlosser (2013a) in *Command and Control: Nuclear Weapons, the Damascus Accident, and the Illusion of Safety*, utilising the Freedom of Information Act, reveals the extent of the cover-ups by the US. The UK government provides less access than US laws permit, and so far a book documenting nuclear near misses in Britain is yet to be published, however since the Cold War ended a steady trickle of stories has emerged (Schlosser, 2013b)

Even if every nuclear weapon were destroyed, the knowledge of how to make them cannot be *disinvented*. Now only a ceaseless vigilance can keep us safe" (Thatcher, 1984) [my emphasis] Thatcher had no qualms about representing total nuclear disarmament as impossible to international audiences: "However alarmed we are by those weapons, we cannot disinvent them. The world cannot cancel the knowledge of how to make them. It is an irreversible fact." (Thatcher, 1982c) For Thatcher's government at least the nuclear era permits a restricted bandwidth of policies: "For us [the UK, and perhaps NATO] the task is to harness the existence of nuclear weapons to the service of peace, as we have done for half a lifetime."(Ibid) The disinventible representation could also be found in the Trident White Paper (MoD, 1980, p. 2), and was frequently reproduced with vim in the press.[174] Indeed, Thatcher's constitution of the nuclear problem legitimises the maintenance of a nuclear deterrent, while simultaneously marginalising the goal of global disarmament advocated by Labour; if something is "disinventible", trying to disinvent it becomes a futile, or as Thatcher argued, a "naïve" past-time.[175]

While Thatcher opposed proliferation of nuclear weapons, she was hardly emphatic. Thatcher's non-proliferation policy was one of subdued discouragement: "The distinctive role of the non-nuclear countries, I suggest, is to recognise that proliferation of nuclear weapons cannot be the way to a safer world" (Thatcher, 1982c). Indeed, the government's discourse did not represent proliferation as a global threat to international security in the same way we shall see the post-Cold War nuclear discourse does (See Chapter 6). Instead, the government was rather sanguine about proliferation: the White Paper's only mention of proliferation does not articulate any urgent threat, but instead only mentions it to represent potential UK unilateral disarmament as useless in preventing it:

> The government sees no realistic ground for supposing that unilateral gestures of renunciation by Britain - gestures which there is not the slightest likelihood that any other nuclear power would emulate - would make any marked or lasting difference to the prospects of accession to the Treaty those comparatively few nation which might be capable within a reasonable time of acquiring some nuclear weapons capability but whose assessment of their own national interest has so far led them to decide against accession (MoD, 1980, p. 24)

Besides the absence of any representation of urgent threat, the interesting thing to note is the government's use of "national interest" seems to grant the proliferators a certain amount of

[174] For example, the Lord Chalfont (1980) in *The Times* writes of the White Paper's declaration that nuclear weapons cannot be disinvented and so the only option now is to harness them for the purposes of peace that " "This is an assumption which would be challenged only by uncompromising pacifists".

[175] The Conservative Manifesto 1983 makes the implication of this representation explicit: "Labour's support for gestures of one-sided disarmament is reckless and naïve"(Conservative Party, 1983)

legitimacy should they choose to proliferate. Taken together then, Thatcher's rather passive endorsement of non-proliferation is not as vulnerable to accusations of hypocrisy as the aggressive counter-proliferation policies of the 21st century discourse (Chapter 6).

The above illustrates how the combination of the representation of "disinventibility", support for management strategies, and a weak non-proliferation policy constituted an internally stable base for the UK's nuclear foreign policy constellation. However, under fierce attack from Labour, Thatcher's government still had to defend the purchase of Trident to the British public and attach to it meanings that granted it utility and legitimacy. As the rest of the chapter will illustrate, the construction of the Soviet Union's identity in British discourse is crucial to understanding how the rest of the foreign policy nexus achieves internal stability and could withstand the attacks from Labour. I will therefore analyse it in depth.[176]

Representing the Enemy the Enemy: The Soviet Threat

Thatcher did not create a new nuclear discourse out of thin air, she drew on and modified and innovated with the discursive resources available. There was a deep discursive economy surrounding the Soviet Union. The UK had maintained nuclear forces since 1952 based on the assumption of the need for meeting the Moscow Criterion,[177] and the Soviet Union had been constituted as *the* enemy Other of the UK's foreign policy for at least as long. Meanwhile, deterrence theorizing and arms control took the Soviet threat and aggressive intent as an assumption (MccGwire, 1986a, 2001). The UK had been one of the founding members of an alliance that had had a stated reliance upon nuclear deterrence of the Soviets for decades.[178] Popular culture throughout the Cold War period was saturated with a imagined Russian villains

[176] I am also going into depth because a briefer treatment of the identity as the radical other would risk accusations that I was contributing to the under analysed reification of the Soviet Union in British history.
[177] The Moscow Criterion was the UK needed to be capable of inflicting sufficient destruction on the Soviet Union to ensure it did not get "tempted" to attack Europe (Baylis, 2005, p. 55). This formulation assumed the Soviets had the intention and directed debate towards the question of "how much" was necessary rather than whether it was necessary at all. Stoddart (2008) provides a dense description of the extensive deliberations within the British Military about the how much was required to fulfil the Moscow Criterion during the 1960s and 1970s. Indeed, this account illustrates one of the institutional means through which the UK's assumptions about the Soviet's intentions were (re)produced and arguably illustrates how it constrained what was thought of. Heated debate regarding the need or lack thereof to breach Moscow's ABM missile defences divided the military and MoD. However, whether the Soviet Union required deterring or consideration of a non-coercive policy did not feature. Further, if the military and MoD internal thinking remained in a box, as an institution it was not inclined to engage with those from outside. In a personal communication, Former British General Ramsbotham (2013) explained how during the 1980s the military establishment strongly frowned upon its employees engaging in debate with the anti-nuclear movement. Meanwhile, Booth and Wheeler, (Booth & Wheeler, 1992) have written how during the Cold War academics and professionals that did not share the MoD's belief in deterrence or the Soviet Union were systematically excluded.
[178] NATO make no secret of this; one only need to briefly browse the NATO archives for sufficient evidence (NATO, n.d.)

of many peculiar stripes, but almost always dastardly.[179] Indeed, as Neumann notes "The social construction of the Soviet Union was integral to Europeans' social construction of political identity as such, and thus a part of everyday politics" (Neumann, 2003, pp. 29–30). In short, Thatcher's government had a fertile discursive context in which to work.

Indeed, The Cold War and official nuclear discourse had no shortage of signs to represent the Soviet Union's system of government: "Tyrannous", "totalitarian", "authoritarian" (see following analysis) were used interchangeably to describe the system of government employed by the Soviets. The UK government's representation of the Soviet Union shows impressive consistency in the 1980s. Almost always signs articulating the Soviet Union's political identity were juxtaposed in the speeches to those signs articulating the UK's Self and the collective "West's" Self-identity: "Freedom" "liberty" "democracy". This process of *negative differentiation* of Soviet and the Western identities produced a firm and widely understood enemy image for the UK public and a secure collective Self- identity.[180] Amongst a dense array of texts, this excerpt provides proves a particularly good example:

> The division of responsibility between State and society of which I have spoken is one of the essential conditions of liberty everywhere. Of course, we need to be sensitive to other cultures, and their traditions. But we believe that they will be best able to reach both happiness and prosperity if they seek similar distinctions. This belief is the main reason for our scorn for totalitarian societies, whether Nazi, Communist or anything else. For they sought and seek, utterly to fuse State and society. They prohibit private associations. They circumscribe religion. They organize culture to conform to the purposes of the State. (Thatcher, 1980a)

Thatcher's boundary producing performance could not be starker. The Western Self believe in liberty, prosperity and happiness, the less developed Other is totalitarian and thus deserving of "[the West's] scorn" for their un-Western and thus inferior practices. If there was one element of the Soviet's identity that was relatively uncontested in UK discourse by the 1980s it was that the Soviet Union was undemocratic and repressive towards its own population. However this would not alone necessarily suffice to legitimise nuclear deterrence against the Soviet Union. As the above quote suggests through the linking of Nazi Germany with the Soviet Union, representations of the Soviet Union's intentions and capabilities were also critical to the Thatcher Government's nuclear policy discourse.

[179] See Ian Fleming's series of James Bond novels for famous examples.
[180] The radical Self/Other -dichotomy of the UK and the Soviet Union under Thatcher mirrors closely Campbell's articulation of the US Foreign policy Self/Other dichotomy in *Writing Security* (1998)

Representing the Soviet Union's Aggressive Identity

More than just repressing their own people, the Soviet Union in the UK's discourse was frequently represented as having aggressive intentions and designs on conquering Europe. The defence minister Pym in presenting defence policy to Parliament in 1980 offers a textbook articulation of the Soviet Union's political-temporal identity: "The essence of that objective [of the Soviet Union] is the unremitting extension of influence by means both fair and foul, exploiting any cracks they may detect in their opponents' armour and any signs of political or moral weakness." (HC Deb 28 April 1980 vol 983 cc1007) This articulation of the Soviet Union spatial-political identity as "aggressive", "ruthless"(Thatcher, 1982d) and immoral was often directly juxtaposed in a negative linking process to the UK and its allies' "peaceful" and "ethics" and "morality" bound identity. One of Thatcher's speeches in the run up to the 1983 election provides a good example: "But we [Britain] must not fall into the trap of projecting our own morality onto the Soviet leaders. They do not share our aspirations: they are not constrained by our ethics, they have always considered themselves exempt from the rules that bind other states" (Thatcher, 1983b). This *radical Othering* of the Soviet Union and the inscription of aggressive intent was made possible within the discourse by the mobilisation of four complementary themes: the Soviet Union's stated ideological opposition to capitalism, their unnecessarily large and ever growing(and thus threatening) military strength, their interventions in the developing world, and then the notion that the Soviet Union was inherently deceitful thus allowing any proclamations of peaceful intentions to be ignored.

Representing the Soviet Union's Ideology

Thatcher was particularly fond of quoting former Soviet leaders proclamations on the struggle against capitalism to demonstrate the Soviet Union's aggressive intentions. In one of Thatcher's first speeches as Premier she showcased her familiarity with the writings of Lenin: "The Soviet Union continues to proclaim the ideological struggle. It asserts that the demise of the Western political system is inevitable. In 1919 Lenin said: "World imperialism cannot live side by side with a victorious Soviet revolution—the one or the other will be victorious in the end." (Thatcher, 1979c) Or to the US congress "The Soviet Union has never concealed its real aim. In the words of Mr. Brezhnev (5 years dead at the time of the speech), "the total triumph of all Socialism all over the world is inevitable—for this triumph we shall struggle with no lack of effort[!]" Indeed, there has been no lack of effort"(Thatcher, 1985) The Thatcher Government's Cold War discourse usually fleshes out evidence for the Soviet Union's military intentions with representations of their foreign policy that supported the narrative.

This "effort", the Soviet Union was represented to have been undertaking in order to overthrow

"freedom" constituted a key theme in the UK's nuclear discourse. Speaking in 1980, Thatcher represents the Soviet Union's interventions in the developing world as proof of the Soviet's efforts to conduct the aforementioned struggle with military means: "[…] the Soviet Union, whose Government have chosen to exploit instability to gain influence, also has much to answer for. In the past five years we have seen intervention by Soviet proxies in Angola, Ethiopia, South Yemen and Cambodia. And day by day we are witnessing the direct use of Soviet arms to impose a puppet regime on the brave Afghan people."(Thatcher, 1980d) Indeed, the UK's pro nuclear discourse frequently mobilises the Soviet Union's intervention in Afghanistan, which overlapped with the decision to purchase Trident, to buffer its assertion that the Soviet Union must be met with military power rather than diplomacy. In 1980, Thatcher, addressing the Scottish Conservatives, uses Afghanistan as an example to explain where a softer approach to the Soviet Union would lead: "[The] Afghanistan experience has shown us all what the "hug of the bear" is liable to mean."(Thatcher, 1980b) Further, the government could rely on Conservative MPs to represent Soviet actions in Afghanistan as a warning against the dangers of disarmament.[181]

Representing the Soviet Union's Military Power

So far I have outlined the representations of the Soviet Union as an authoritarian regime, with aggressive ideology which is proven by its willingness to undertake military interventions in the developing world. This representation itself would have permitted a hostile or at least extremely cautious policy towards the Soviet Union. However, the UK pro-nuclear discourse generated the urgency and absolute necessity for maintaining and upgrading the UK's nuclear weapons, through representing the Soviet Union's military capacity as unnecessarily large and ever growing. As the second half of this chapter will illustrate, while these interlinking temporal and political constructions of the Soviet identity provide the urgency necessary for securitizing the Soviet Union and thus help legitimize the acquisition of Trident(second half of the chapter), they also serve to deflect ethical responsibility for the "arms race" on to the Soviet *other*.

[181] For example, in a 1980 nuclear debate MP Dr. Alan Glyn is typical "We are debating one of the most important issues [British nuclear weapons] against a background of the threat of war. We have witnessed the invasion of Afghanistan, and there is a possible threat to Yugoslavia. Russia is as aggressive now, if not more so, as it was under the rule of the Czars. It thinks that it can get away with almost anything without our pulling the nuclear trigger." (HC Deb 24 January 1980 vol 977 cc736*)* In Glyn's view upgrading British nuclear weapons as central to ensuring the UK does not meet the same fate: "The debate has revealed to the nation and to our constituents how vulnerable we are to Soviet aggression, and shows the justification for the additional expenditure proposed by my right hon. Friend. I would go further. I would wish to spend more. We must spend money if we are to maintain our capability." (HC Deb 28 April 1980 vol 983 cc1089)

In 1979 Thatcher, perhaps preparing the ground for the acquisition of Trident, paints a bleak picture of the UK's security outlook should they refrain from new nuclear weapons.[182] In an early example of what was a common theme in Thatcher's official foreign policy discourse she explains Russia's military strength in ominous terms: "The Russians already enjoy an advantage. Unless we deploy more modern weapons soon things will get worse. This might tempt the Soviet leaders to think they could exercise political pressure on Europe. Such a situation cannot be allowed to arise. I know that some members of the Alliance will not find it easy to take the necessary decisions about modernising our nuclear forces." (Thatcher, 1979a) This sense of urgency and the dynamic nature of the threat getting out of control was stressed by Thatcher's government throughout the 1980s, and mirrored by NATO.[183] The White Paper particularly emphasised the temporal dimension to the Soviet's military identity: namely that it was getting more powerful:

> The issue [to disarm by the 1990s] falls to be settled in circumstances much less favourable for Western security than when the force and Nassau decisions were taken - there is for example a changed strategic balance and much stronger more versatile all round Soviet military capability than before, wielded moreover with growing adventurism highlighted in Afghanistan. It would be strange to regard the curtailment of our deterrent insurance as timely and appropriate now. (MoD, 1980, p. I–4)

The notion that the Soviet Union was winning the arms race and becoming ever stronger comparably to the West also *positively links* and reinforces the representations of the Soviet Union as holding expansionist ambitions in Europe. Thatcher (1979a) articulates clearly how the military strength of the Russia signified their aggressive intentions: "The Russians have equipped themselves with military forces whose capabilities and philosophy are better matched to the demands of an offensive than of a defensive policy and whose ambitions are global in scale." Continuing in the same vein Thatcher goes on: "The Soviet armies in Europe are organised and trained for attack. Their military strength is growing. The Russians do not publish their intentions. So we must judge them by their military capabilities". The Soviet threat is thus not represented as static, but rapidly growing, which itself is taken as proof of their aggressive intentions. In the UK pro-nuclear discourse, the Soviet Union drives the arms race, giving the UK no choice but to react by renewing its nuclear weapons or risk coercion or even subjugation. The UK government's construction of the Soviet Union's ethical identity, is therefore one of responsibility for the nuclear arms race, and ultimately the hostility between the East and the West. But, it should also be noted, that the UK's Cold War discourse was also pessimistic about

[182] Thatcher received a note on their first day of office from the outgoing Labour PM informing her of the preliminary negotiations with the US regarding the acquisition of Trident (Hennessy, 2007, p. 323).
[183] See virtually any NATO policy document from the period, for example (NATO, 1981)

the rest of the world.[184] In Thatcher's imagined geography, the UK and its allies must remain militarily and politically strong not only in order to face the Soviet Union, but also because the rest of the world is also becoming more and more dangerous.

Representing the Soviet Union's Deceitfulness

Thatcher's foreign policy discourse represents the Soviet Union's political identity as inherently untrustworthy and deceitful. This supports the common argument found in the discourse that the UK must judge Soviet's intentions on their military strength, rather than listen to any Soviet explanation. Within this frame, the Soviet Union rarely issues just mere statements, but "propaganda". For example, in a speech in 1983 Thatcher manages to capture the wide spectrum of deception allotted to the Soviet Union in a single sentence: "No amount of propaganda, of spurious half-truths can disguise the determination of the Soviet Union to maintain or gain numerical advantage in weaponry, men and materials."(Thatcher, 1983b) So when the Soviet Union protests that it is the US driving the arms race, or that it wishes to live in peaceful co-existence with the West, this can be denounced as disingenuous "propaganda". This representation of the Soviet identity serves to stabilise Thatcher's Cold War discourse when Soviet peaceful proclamations or practices threatened to destabilise their aggressive, militaristic, and expansionist spatial-temporal identity.

This sign was not entirely stable: Thatcher's government was after all selective in which statements they could rule out. Indeed, exceptions to the rule occurred whenever the Soviet Union issued statements that could fit with the UK government's articulation of the Soviet identity, for example the Brezhnev and Lenin quotes mentioned above. These statements, regardless of the Soviet's reputation for propaganda, were represented as proof of the representation of the Soviet Union's aggressive identity.

Representing the Soviet Union's Good Side

So far, I have concentrated on British Nuclear weapons discursive representations of the Soviet Union's identity that are more or less unambiguously negative. However, while the Soviet Union was undoubtedly an, or rather, *the* enemy, the government occasionally articulated a grudging respect for the Soviet Union's repellence of Nazi Germany. The rationale for the White Paper is a

[184] For example Thatcher paints a gloomy picture of the international in 1980, "With each day it becomes clearer that in the wider world we face darkening horizons, and the war between Iran and Iraq is the latest symptom of a deeper malady. Europe and North America are centres of stability in an increasingly anxious world. The Community and the Alliance are the guarantee to other countries that democracy and freedom of choice are still possible. They stand for order and the rule of law in an age when disorder and lawlessness are ever more widespread."(Thatcher, 1980c)

good example of how the British discourse integrates the Soviet's WWII effort seamlessly into the discourse advocating nuclear weapons. The White Paper (MoD, 1980, p. 5) states, "The Soviet Union is a very large and powerful state, which has in the past demonstrated great resilience and resolve", however this hat tip to the Soviet's efforts in WWII only provides additional reason to upgrade the UK's nuclear weapons: " [The Soviet Union's] history, outlook, political doctrines and planning all suggest that its view of how much destruction would constitute intolerable disaster might widely differ from that of most NATO countries"(*Ibid*). Thus, while the Soviet Union's collective effort fighting with the allies on the Eastern front might be presumed to destabilise the representations of them the radical Other, the UK government stabilised this problem by representing it as evidence for why the threat of nuclear destruction provided by Trident needed to be so great.

Thatcher's government occasionally articulated a second common positive representation of the Soviet Union that adds a temporal nuance to the Soviet Union's identity. This occurs when the subject identity of the Soviet Union is split between the "authoritarian" regime and the "oppressed" people. Within the Cold War narrative, outlined above, the Soviet Union's temporal-spatial identity was naturalized as permanently hostile towards the West. This implies a relatively fixed temporal identity of hostility and aggression, and thus legitimises a relatively stable "strong", "practical" and "realistic" response of maintaining and renewing the UK's nuclear weapons for the long term[185] However, the UK discourse does not envision endless war; rather it imagines the potential for a happy ending, and reconciliation with a future Russia if not the Soviet Union, should the people be set free from the regime For example Thatcher, in 1982, makes this distinction: "I cannot forget the Berlin Wall: a grim monument to a cruel and desolate creed; concrete evidence that the Communists know that when people are free to choose, they choose to be free" (Thatcher, 1982a). Indeed, by splitting the subject, Thatcher provide optimism, while remaining consistent with the construction of the Soviet Union's collective identity in the government's discourse: a people desiring freedom suppressed by a tyrannous, aggressive, dictatorship.

The Soviet's Identity in the UK's Nuclear Discourse

The positive process of linking of the signs constituting the Soviet collective identity - authoritarian, repressive, tyrannous, aggressive, increasingly militarily powerful, expansionist and so on - make for an internally stable construction of the radical Other, and a stable constitution of the liberal peaceful UK Self. However, throughout the 1980s Thatcher's

[185] The Thatcher (1983a) speech to the Young Conservatives offers several key representations of British identity performed by Thatcher: "Idealist" yet "realistic" and "practical", "peaceful" yet "strong".

government, also drew from, and participated in the construction of a broader older global Cold War discourse which had America (the UK's primary ally) at its hub. David Campbell (1998) argues that this Cold War discourse can be traced to the late 1940s, to the Russian Revolution of 1917, and even further back to an anti-communist discourse beginning with Karl Marx's publications in the 1840s. While in Europe, Neumann (1999, p.102) suggests that "The dominant version [of Russian identity in Europe between 1945 and 1989] was of an Asiatic/barbarian political power that had availed itself of the opportunity offered by the Second World War to intrude into Europe by military means".[186] In short, the Thatcher government's performances of Soviet Union's aggressive identity had a broad and established discursive economy to draw upon.

Indeed, by the 1980s many of the signs associated with the Soviet Union were relatively uncontested in the mainstream. Few on the British left, even Marxists, contested that the Soviet Union was an authoritarian regime. Even fewer claimed that the Soviet Union was *not* a military superpower. Moreover, an opinion poll carried out on behalf of the BBC in 1981 reported that only six per cent of those questioned believed the Soviets wanted world peace (MORI Opinion poll cited in *The Times*, 1981).While opinion polls demand scepticism, the huge margin indicates that a sizable majority of the British public shared a similar inter-subjective understanding of the Soviet's aggressive identity as that articulated by Thatcher's government.

In general, Labour did not directly contest spatial the identity of the Soviet Union, rather they either omitted it, or represented the Super Power's as equally responsible for the tension in the Cold War. Neither of Labour's manifestos (1987; 1983) offers a direct rebuff to Thatcher's articulations of the Soviet Union threat, but talk in general terms about the East West "tension". Indeed, many Labour MPs argued that the US's foreign policy was just as dangerous as the Soviet's, and that the UK should distance itself from both, starting with their nuclear weapons. For example, MP James Kilfedder "it would be far better if we could have a policy separate and apart from the United States, so that if the Americans wanted to fight it out themselves they could do so without risk to our citizens."(HC Deb 24 January 1980 vol 977 cc723*)* Meanwhile, MP Stanley Newans provides an example of the marginalised alternative reading of US history, implying the same thing: "We do not approve of the Soviet action in Afghanistan, the crack-down on dissidents, the deployment of SS20s and the Backfire bombers. Nor do we approve of continual attempts by Western Governments to prevent social change in under-developed countries, for which purpose they have frequently launched military expeditions and

[186] Indeed, as the earlier sections indicate, this representation was certainly common in the UK. Indeed, the quote that Neumann kicks off the section with comes from Winston Churchill in 1945.

clandestine operations against Third world countries in the past. Examples are Vietnam, Cambodia, Oman and the Dominican Republic." (HC Deb 24 Jan 1980 vol 977 cc763)

However, distancing the UK from both nuclear superpowers did not solve the security problem the represented in the UK discourse as being posed by the Soviet Union. As much as the British public may have opposed US military actions abroad, apportioning blame on the US for the arms race would not seem to address the Soviet threat performed by Thatcher's government and indeed performed to some extent by all UK governments defence policy since WWII.

Representing the Self: The UK's Nuclear Identity

So far this chapter has focused mainly on the Soviet Union's identity within the broader UK Cold War discourse. The section mapped the Soviet Union's identity within this discourse and drew in broad strokes how this was juxtaposed with the UK and the NATO or Western Self. The next section draws on Hansen's *degrees of otherness* to analyse how the UK's nuclear policy performances articulate a privileged identity for the UK within NATO. The UK's official foreign policy discourse articulates three basic *selves* in the discourse. The West/ NATO Self, the UK Self and the conservative UK government Self (juxtaposed with the anti-nuclear Labour Other). The UK government's representations of "the West" and its identity as "free", "democratic", "peaceful" opposed to "tyrannical" and "aggressive" were covered above. However, the UK government's nuclear policy performances also produced nuanced but distinct constructions of the *Self-identity* through negative linking with NATO countries. The following section examines these constructions and argues they can be considered a means through which the UK *sought status* and generated desirable meanings through its nuclear weapons policy.

Performing the UK's Nuclear Identity

The UK's nuclear weapons were not only represented as critical to the UK's existential security but rather those weapons, and therefore the UK itself was represented as critical to Europe's security. As Thatcher put it: "If Britain were to abandon its defence of liberty [by giving up nuclear weapons], we wouldn't just decline comfortably into Swedish neutrality. It would be the abandonment of belief in ourselves, a cracking of the cornerstone of the Atlantic Alliance. It really is that serious […]" (Thatcher, 1987b). Thus within the UK's foreign policy discourse, its nuclear weapons allow the UK to perform for itself a privileged identity within the alliance. While the values with which each member of the alliance are said to stand for are never distinguished, the UK's nuclear weapons policy performed a "distinctive", "unique", and "significant" task in helping the alliance defend itself. The UK foreign policy discourse usually does not offer specific representations of the other NATO members non-nuclear contributions,

but it is safe to assume that they would not be a "radical" or starkly negative *Other*, but just mildly inferior: perhaps "conventional" rather than "nuclear", "normal" rather than "unique". The White Paper justifying the purchase of Trident makes this point clearly:

> Our contribution to the alliance in this field [nuclear weapons] is unique. France like Britain, has a powerful nuclear force under independent national control; but her distinctive policy - well understood, long established and firmly held - debars her from undertaking the clear commitment to collective Alliance deterrent concepts, planning and strategy which we have made. No other European member of NATO is even remotely a potential candidate to contribute independent nuclear forces. The government regards this distinctive British contribution to NATO as of great importance. Our allies recognise its significance, as they made clear for example in the 1974 Ottawa Declaration[187] (MoD, 1980, p. 4)

The UK's constitution of its nuclear identity within the alliance demonstrates how privileged identity can be articulated without the "radical Othering" Derrida and Campbell draw attention to (Hansen, 2006, p. 39). Rather, the UK discourse merely constitutes itself as "distinctive" or "unique". This implies privilege and superiority compared to the norm, but not hostility. Moreover, if we accept constituting privileged identity for oneself as a proxy for *seeking status*, then this also illustrates how the UK used the representation of its nuclear weapons security effects to grant itself status amongst its NATO peers. This also indicates that the security status dichotomy in the literature (see Chapter 2) is unhelpful because in the UK's Cold War nuclear discourse, the representation of the security benefits were mutually constitutive of the status it sought through its nuclear weapons policy.

This superior "identity is buttressed by a somewhat rose-tinted representation of British history that is mobilised frequently in the UK's discourse. Indeed, this version of British history conjures away Britain's colonial history, or rather ignores the anti-colonial discourse of British history.

> Mr. Chairman, we cannot overestimate the seriousness of the debate over defence in this election. It is about the defence of liberty in the world, as well as the liberty of our country. For Britain has a unique and proud record in history of safeguarding and advancing the rights of small nations and oppressed peoples. It was the Royal Navy which abolished the Slave Trade—the most altruistic use of force by a great power the world has seen. (Thatcher, 1987b)

[187] It's worth noting that while the Ottawa Declaration (NATO, 1974) sounds a positive note towards the UK's nuclear role in NATO, it is hardly emphatic: "The European members who provide three-quarters of the conventional strength of the Alliance in Europe, and two of whom possess nuclear forces capable of playing a deterrent role of their own contributing to the overall strengthening of the deterrence of the Alliance, undertake to make the necessary contribution to maintain the common defence at a level capable of deterring and if necessary repelling all actions directed against the independence and territorial integrity of the members of the Alliance."

Thus, while NATO and its members all fight against tyranny in the name of liberty, the official discourse privileges the UK as having a particularly special identity in the history of this on-going struggle. Again this is not a -radical Self/Other differentiation, rather one of "liberty" versus "liberty-plus". The UK discourse suggests that while the West collectively fights for liberty, some in the alliance are better at it than others.

The UK's NATO Identity Juxtaposed to France's

As the earlier example illustrates, the UK's official discourse also generally represents the French nuclear identity in diplomatic and respectful terms. However, while France are represented with a positive, though slightly ambiguous identity, as an ally that happens to have nuclear weapons, the UK's distinct nuclear identity in NATO requires stressing that the UK's nuclear weapons contribute to NATO while France's do not. This contributes to the UK's identity in the discourse as a "reliable" trusted and "significant" contributor to the alliance, for example here: "Britain is a reliable ally, and with a Conservative Government will always remain so—reliable in NATO, reliable beyond NATO, an ally and a friend to be trusted. And trusted not least by our partners in the European Community" (Thatcher, 1982d) The White Paper and speeches throughout the Cold War make the same point, and although it is never made officially explicit, if one assumes that identity construction is always relational, it is logical to believe that the "reliable" and "trusted" signs are a reference to other less reliable allies, probably France.[188] In the broader US and UK discourses, the audience can be presumed to fill in the blanks.

Indeed, frequently the UK official discourse articulates doubts about France's commitment and loyalty to NATO and contrasts their identity unfavourably to the UK's. Take Thatcher's response to a question about France's dialogue with the Soviet Union "Well France has always felt, since de Gaulle's time, that she has had something of a special relationship with the Soviet Union. [...]. France certainly does hold a slightly different view-point than ours" (Thatcher, 1981a) While this might at first seem innocent, it begins to look less so when juxtaposed to how the term "special relationship" is usually used within the British discourse: to refer to the relationship between the US and the UK. An extract from that same press conference illustrates this clearly:

> Well I think there is a special relationship but then I have always thought there was a special relationship between English speaking peoples. We share the same cultural

[188] As Hansen (2006, p. 44) explains, "discourses are articulated through the course of foreign policy debate, and a particular discourse might become established to such an extent that texts no longer need to make as detailed constructions of identity as when the problem first manifested itself on the political and media agenda." It scarcely needs saying that France's ambiguous reputation for military reliability has a long history in British discourse.

> heritage, we share the same background, we share the same ideals. I am very happy that added to that special relationship there should be a particularly happy relationship between the two governments and between the two Heads of Government (Thatcher, 1981a)

Junior Partner: the UK Self and the US Other

While the UK by the 1980s has certainly accepted that it ranks below the US, who it frequently as a "superpower" with greater status in the world than itself, its nuclear weapons still grant it special status in the alliance. The 1980 nuclear White Paper articulates how the UK's nuclear weapons grant it the nuanced identity of "lesser, but still important": "The nuclear strengths of Britain or France may seem modest by comparison with the superpower armouries, but the damage they could inflict is in absolute terms immense"(MoD, 1980, p. 4) The White Paper later puts their relative worth in euphemistic but still clearer terms: "Clearly Britain need not have as much power as the United States. Overwhelmingly Britain would be a much smaller prize to an aggressor than overwhelming the United States[…]" (MoD, 1980, p. 5).These representations imply that the nuclear force required relates to the value of the "prize" a state would be worth to a potential aggressor. This illustrates how the UK's nuclear forces, even when juxtaposed with the US's superior power, again constitutes a privileged position for the UK within Europe and NATO; if the number of nuclear weapons required reflects the size of the "prize" then, by apparently requiring its own nuclear weapons, the UK implies that those states that do not require nuclear weapons represent a smaller prize still. It is worth noting that in this respect, France might equal the UK in terms of general status, but as the UK's nuclear forces are assigned to NATO, they provide a privileged identity, as "reliable ally".

The UK government's rationale itself further implies privileged status in the alliance. The UK's almost always refers to its nuclear weapons as an "independent" deterrent that provide utility as a "second/independent centre of decision making" to the alliance. Although the UK discourse never articulates it, the "independent" sign attributed to its nuclear weapons is juxtaposed other NATO countries presumable "dependence".[189] The "second centre" rationale explains the UK's nuclear weapons utility to the alliance not in terms of the additional firepower they offer to NATO, but in terms of the complicating effect they have on the Soviet Union's calculations about the strength of the NATO nuclear umbrella.[190]As many critics have noted (Quinlan, 2006; Freedman, 1980), whenever UK governments explain the "second centre" rationale, they are always careful to state that while the UK does not doubt the US's nuclear guarantee it fears the

[189] It is worth noting NATO's stated reliance on nuclear weapons could be used to attack Labour's policy of unilateral disarmament. As a leader in *The Times* (1981a) put it: "There is no piety in giving up our own bomb only to shelter - holier (of course) than them - behind the Americans."
[190] See the White Paper (MoD, 1980, pp. 4–6)

Soviet's may do. As the White Paper (MoD, 1980) puts it: "Modernised US nuclear forces in Europe help guard against any such *misconception* [about the US nuclear umbrella]; but an independent capability fully under European control provides a key element of insurance" [my emphasis] (MoD, 1980, p. 3). The conventional critique of the second centre rationale suggests it provides a diplomatic solution to allow the UK to avoid explicitly casting doubt on the US nuclear guarantee (Freedman, 1980; Quinlan, 2006). However, the Second Centre rationale also serves as a boon to the UK's distinct identity within NATO. It implies the UK's nuclear weapons grant it status as second in command. While the size and strength of the US and its nuclear armoury must make it rank first (though this is only implied rather than stated), the UK's nuclear weapons provide for the UK a distinct privileged status in the alliance that it would not otherwise have. Take away the nuclear weapons, and the UK's role in decision making gets relegated to the lower order kerfuffle of the rest of alliance's non-independent nuclear decision making.

The UK's Ethical Identity: Passing Responsibility for the "Arms Race"

The Thatcher government accepted that living under a nuclear shadow was undesirable and therefore sought to explain how to mitigate it, if not how to solve it. The constitution of the nuclear weapons problem as "disinventible" ruled out disarmament, and implied management strategies – in the UK's case maintaining a nuclear deterrent and supporting arms control. But nonetheless while the general problem of nuclear weapons is constituted as disinventible and timeless, the perception of the growing nuclear "arms race" between the East and West was something that Thatcher's government had to address. Especially, as the anti-nuclear movement and Labour sought to represent the UK as at least partly responsible (see above)[191].

Thatcher's nuclear discourse defended the UK's (NATO and the US's) nuclear policy and stabilized the UK's "peaceful" identity by insisting the ethical responsibility for the nuclear arms race and nuclear weapons lay with the Soviet Union. The Cold War's dense performative architecture that had reified in the mainstream discourse the West's "peaceful" "defensive" identity and the Soviet's *other's* "aggressive" and "militaristic" identity helped Thatcher to represent the UK's and NATO's nuclear weapons policy as a defensive response to the Soviet Union's aggressive intentions. Because the Soviets were assumed to understand the UK and the West's peaceful intentions, the Soviet's large military, and especially its expansion, was taken as

[191] For example, the Labour MP Frank Allaun suggested that Thatcher's argument that the UK must get Trident to negotiate from "a position of strength" with Russia would produce arms racing: "What would happen if the Russians were to say the same? Surely it is a logical impossibility for two sides each to be stronger than the other. It is that mistaken concept that is leading to the arms race and world disaster" (HC Deb 24 Jan 1980 vol 977 cc735)

a sign of aggressive intent, requiring further military response.[192] Thatcher's foreign policy performances explicitly assumed the Soviet Union could not have felt threatened by the West, as her rhetorical question to Congress demonstrates; she suggested history spoke for itself "Does it need saying that the Soviet Union has nothing to fear from us [The West]? For several years after the war the United States had a monopoly of nuclear weapons, but was a threat to no-one."(Thatcher, 1983b) As mentioned above, the official discourse tended to conjure away, and ignore alternative representations of the Korean and Viet Nam wars and Western interventions in Central America. Or, if they had to acknowledge them, they represented them as legitimate support for peoples battling tyranny. However, to paraphrase Thatcher, it is unlikely that the US and UK representations of those wars would have found currency in the Kremlin.[193]

While Thatcher's black and white moral geography helped stabilize the UK government discourse and pass ethical responsibility for nuclear weapons onto the Soviets, it probably did so at the cost of exacerbating the Cold War. Robert Jervis (1977, p. 181) argues how failing to understand how other states can interpret your military development as threatening, was a "failure of empathy" that would likely lead to exacerbation of a *security dilemma*.[194] Indeed, Thatcher's Cold War nuclear discourse, which frequently juxtaposed the West's "defensive" military build-up to the Soviet's necessarily aggressive military build-up certainly appear to bear witness to this. In post-structural terms, the performances of such radical Self/Other identifies meant that UK and the West could avoid responsibility for nuclear arms race but only by inflaming the Cold War security dilemma Jervis described. However, these performances of the Soviet and the UK's ethical identities did allow the UK to reconcile the nuclear weapons policy with its "peaceful" and "defensive" identity. Thatcher makes it clear throughout the 1980s where the responsibility for the arms race lies, and the following quote is exemplary:

> It is difficult to believe that the Soviet Government are unconscious of the dangers to which their present policies are exposing the international community. But so far they have been content to welcome the opening of Pandora's box and to cheer on the escaped afflictions. It is often claimed—in my view quite wrongly—that the actions of the Soviet Government are essentially defensive. Not only are the Soviet Union ethically responsible for the nuclear tension, but they are consciously inflaming it.(Thatcher, 1980d

[192] Robert Jervis (1977) makes a similar point in "Co-operation Under the Security Dilemma"
[193] Indeed, in the Soviet Union, NATO was known universally as 'aggressivnyi blok', the aggressive bloc (Williams & Neumann, 2000, p. 374).
[194] The concept of the *security dilemma* was first developed by Hertz (1951) and refers to the difficulty of reassuring your neighbours that your military build-up is intended for defence rather than aggression, and the tendency for such actions to lead to arms racing and overall reduction in security for both sides. See Booth and Wheeler (2008) excellent book which clarifies the term, and show how much of the discipline of IR orbits the problem it describes.

A Uniquely Western Ethical Dilemma

However, Thatcher's pro-nuclear discourse, while ferociously promoting the need for the UK nuclear weapons, frequently articulates melancholy at the state of affairs. Her government repeatedly stresses the evil bit of the 'necessary evil' *cliché*. In the following example, "the difficulty" Thatcher indicates is a reference to identity crisis inherent for Western countries (with their peaceful identity explained above) involved in possessing weapons of such destructive capacity: "Because of their fear-some implications, as well as their expense, nuclear weapons raise issues of particular difficulty for democratic governments. But in the conditions of Europe today the need for the instruments of deterrence is inescapable."(Thatcher, 1979a) Thatcher elaborates on this ethical identity dilemma in another speech "Democracies are naturally peace-loving, there is so much which our people wish to do with their lives, so many uses for our resources other than military equipment. The use of force and the threat of force to advance our beliefs are no part of our philosophy."(Thatcher, 1983b) Both these passages present and acknowledge the ethical dilemma of nuclear weapons, and reconcile it with the West's "peaceful" Self-identity. However they also simultaneously imply why it is so critical that the West overcomes its moral concerns, namely that non-democratic states, the dangerous, morally lacking *Others* [chiefly the Soviet Union] have no such ethical dilemmas. "There are no unilateralists in the Kremlin [!]"(Thatcher, 1981b) became a catch-phrase within the pro-nuclear discourse that sought to paint the "unilateralists"(and the Labour party in particular) as out of touch with the tough realities of the *international* and thus playing into the hands of enemy. [195]

This passage also illustrates the complexity of the Thatcher government's constitution of the UK Self and relationship to the anti-nuclear movement. On the one hand, the anti-nuclear movement in the discourse are represented as "dangerous", "naive", and "reckless", and ultimately a threat to the UK's security. On the other hand, the anti-war movement may be dangerous but they had good intentions; their very existence standing as testament to Thatcher's representation of the UK's identity as a "free", "democratic", "peace loving" country. Meanwhile, the apparent lack of a visible anti-nuclear movement in the Soviet Union served as evidence of their immoral, aggressive identity.[196] While apparently successful in casting the anti-nuclear movement as naive, and the Soviets as aggressive, this was somewhat unstable representation, as a pro-nuclear member of the Kremlin could quite have argued "There are no

[195] For example, The Lord of Norwich repeated the line verbatim in a Lords debate (HL Deb 16 Jun 1982 vol 431 cc665) the following year, as did the MP Stefan Terlezki in the Commons in 1983 (HC Deb 03 Nov 1983 vol 47 cc1051)

[196] There is currently no available evidence to suggest that Thatcher was privy to the nuclear preferences of each of the Kremlin's staff.

unilateralists in Thatcher's cabinet!" Thatcher in effect labels her governments' staunch opposition to unilateral disarmament as the same as her apparently lawless, morally vacuous enemy.

Summary of UK Selves and Others

Thatcher's Cold War geography necessitated urgent and firm foreign policy. After all, the tyrannous Soviet Regime looming at the Eastern gates of Europe could not be ignored. The Soviets were armed with an ever expanding arsenal of nuclear weapons, vast conventional forces and were committed to a morally bankrupt ideology that aimed unceasingly at hegemony over Europe and the World. Meanwhile, even though the UK's official discourse granted most of the Western European states good intentions - they were as unambiguously on the side of liberty as the UK - their lack of an independent nuclear deterrent of their own made them dependent on the US and the UK for their safety. The French, while apparently part of the West's zone of stability and peace, could not be relied upon to protect Europe, as they kept their nuclear weapons explicitly separate from NATO. The US, while morally superior, and militarily more than equal to the Soviet Union, was too distant for comfort. Indeed as noted above, the UK's foreign policy performances never openly cast doubt upon the US's resolve, but frequently articulated fear of the Soviet Union's (in)ability to comprehend the strength of the US's alliance with Western Europe.

Linking the Self and the Other: Representing Policy

In the previous sections I laid out how the UK's official discourse represents the UK, the Soviet Union, NATO and the rest of the world. For Hansen, foreign policy performances attempt to produce a stable link between a state's collective identity and the object of their foreign policies: in this case between the Soviet Union and the UK in Thatcher's foreign policy discourse. The foreign policy performed, was the acquisition of a fleet of Trident nuclear armed submarines. The next section will look at how the UK's nuclear weapons policy was represented as legitimate, desirable and thus an enforceable policy, compatible with the UK's identity and suitable for dealing with the Soviet Union as represented in the policy discourse. The next section will analyse the UK's official discourse's: 1) logic of legitimacy and desirability; 2) representations of the UK's nuclear weapons; and 3) the representations of the effects of those weapons. The section will conclude with an analysis of Thatcher's nuclear regime of truth as a whole.

Thatcher's Security Logic of Legitimacy

Buzan et al. (1998, p. 24) define the grammar of a securitizing move as: "If we do not tackle this problem, everything else will be irrelevant (because we will not be here or will not be free to deal with it in our own way)." Indeed, Thatcher and the Conservative government's public pronouncements on the Soviet Union throughout the 1980s almost perfectly fit the definition of securitization move. Throughout their time in office in the 1980s they stressed again and again that the Soviet Union threatened the UK's existence or way of life. For Thatcher, the UK's nuclear weapons formed a cornerstone in the alliance vital for keeping the Soviets at bay: "But first let us be clear what is at stake. It is the very survival of freedom and the rule of law. And the alternative? A society where fundamental rights are denied to all men, and where tyranny prevails." (Thatcher, 1982b)

In Thatcher's foreign policy discourse, the only prudent strategy for managing the nuclear problem was through nuclear deterrence. Thatcher's vivid and terrifying performances of danger during the Cold War translated into her defence policy mantra "a strong defence policy has proved to be the most effective peace policy."[197] For Thatcher and her government a strong defence policy necessitated British nuclear weapons. Indeed Britain's security as a nation and the maintenance of its nuclear weapons were almost one and the same thing, "for you cannot deter, with conventional weapons, an enemy which has, and could threaten to use, nuclear weapons. Exposed to the threat of nuclear blackmail, there would be no option but surrender."(Thatcher, 1986)

As the following will demonstrate, the Government's representation of the Soviet's aggressive identity and assumed intentions in the past and in the present were key to representing the utility and legitimacy of the UK's nuclear weapons.

Breaking the Normal Rules of Politics

To illustrate how the UK Cold War discourse fits within the Securitization conception of a security threat, it is necessary to show how Thatcher "broke the normal rules of politics". The initial decision to purchase Trident could be "enforced" without parliamentary process, and yet still appear legitimate, because nuclear weapons policy had long been securitized. Indeed, nuclear weapons, as almost the definitive "national security issue", had been considered too important and sensitive to be undertaken through the normal parliamentary policy procedures. Instead, UK's nuclear decisions had always been taken in secret, small high-level groups with

[197] In the 1987 election manifesto (The Conservative Party, 1987) and in an article Thatcher penned before the election for the Sunday Express (Thatcher, 1987a)

little or no cabinet or parliamentary consultation (Beach & Gurr, 1999, p. 18; Quinlan, 2006)[198].

Thatcher's decision to purchase Trident followed this precedent closely. The decision was made without consulting the cabinet who were only notified in the hours before she announced the decision to Parliament. Instead, the Government produced the White Paper (MoD, 1980), which explained the rationale behind the decision that had already been taken. A recently declassified internal memorandum from the day after the announcement of Trident's purchase advised Thatcher on how to defend the lack of consultation, and why normal processes were bypassed: "It has been the tradition that specific decisions on defence nuclear equipment should not be taken to Cabinet, because of the extreme sensitivity of the subject [...] and successive Cabinets have entrusted them to the Prime Minister and the colleagues directly concerned."(Armstrong, 1980) Thatcher followed this advice and referred to precedent whenever the lack of consultation was brought up. For instance during Prime Minister's Questions on the 17th of July 1980, Thatcher defended the decision not to consult either her cabinet nor parliament on the grounds that: "The decision was taken in the customary way that such decisions are taken" (HC Deb 28 April 1980 vol 988 cc 1753).[199]

However, while they had precedence on their side, neither the press nor the opposition were impressed. *The Times*, while generally a supporter of nuclear weapons and ultimately the purchase of Trident,[200] opposed the lack of parliamentary procedure and the effort to spark informed public debate.[201] Meanwhile, the opposition: Labour, Liberals and the SDP, took umbrage with both the process and the decision itself. Consequently, neither party let the issue pass and instead forced the issue into the public domain by adopting the cancellation of Trident and the removal of US nuclear missiles into their manifestos for the 1983 and 1987 general elections.

[198] By the time Thatcher came to office, Parliament had not debated nuclear weapons in 15 years.
[199] Meanwhile, The Defence Minister Pym, backing the decision in 1980, explains in more depth the secretive decision making process of matters of "national security": "This [Trident acquisition] is a highly complex and technical matter, and I am sure the House understands the difficulties that would arise from publishing an official paper relating to a major matter of national security in advance of a decision. […]The right and normal course, in line with our whole constitutional practice, is for the Government to take their decision and then to explain it and defend it before Parliament." (HC Deb 28 April 1980 vol 983 cc 1005)
[200] See for example the Times leader "Making Room For Trident" (The Times, 1981a)
[201] *The Times* (The Times, 1980) criticizing the government in a leader after the initial announcement of the Trident acquisition argued : "If anything deserves informed public debate this does.[…]The memorandum presented by Mr Pym when he announced the decision is somewhat sparse[…] it should have been presented before the decision was taken not after. This after all is the point of open government – to encourage informed debate while decision are being made"

Labour's Challenge

If one considers not going through the parliamentary decision process as breaking the normal rules of politics, then it is clear that the nuclear weapons policy of purchasing Trident was successful. However, the Conservative government over the course of the next 10 years had to work hard to enforce the policy. They were ultimately able to push through Trident, but the Labour Party forced nuclear weapons policy into the public sphere by claiming acquiring Trident fuelled the nuclear arms race, wasted money that could be better spent elsewhere, and thus running for election on the policy of scrapping Trident. As a result, while the decision was made in secret, and ultimately carried through, the nuclear policy and thus the security policy towards the Soviet Union became an election issue in 1983 and 1987. To deal with the challenge, Thatcher reproduces the security logic of legitimacy which explains that the first priority of any state is to its people's security and not to any moral code, economic reasoning or universal principle. Defence minister Pym gives a thorough explanation of this security logic of legitimacy, which has a long performative history in the UK and internationally:[202]

> But the hard fact is that defence spending is not an alternative to policies of this kind. It is an essential precondition for them - or at least for having any assurance of enjoying their fruits. Without the national security which our defence spending provides plans to contain inflation restore incentives, secure economic growth, improve our health care and our children's education rest on sand; for the national life in which these objectives can be pursued in peace and freedom may disappear beyond recall[203]. (The Cabinet Office, 1980)

In short, Pym's security logic argues that when given the choice between "your money and your life", you reach for your wallet. Thatcher (1981b) repeatedly put this argument in even starker terms, "The cost of keeping tyranny at bay is high [a reference to the cost of Trident] but it must be paid, for the cost of war would be infinitely higher and we should lose everything that was worthwhile". This approach sought to nullify attacks from Labour that argued for butter rather than guns. MP Frank Allaun offers a typical example of the oppositional discourse's counter argument: "The cost [of Trident] is £5 billion for five submarines and the missiles to go with them. The money spent on one of those submarines—£1 billion—would build homes for 74,000 families and I know which those families would prefer." The Thatcher government's security logic also seeks to overcome the common deontological critiques of deterrence – that

[202] Baylis and Stoddart (Baylis & Stoddart, 2012; Stoddart & Baylis, 2012) argue that this assumption has underpinned British foreign policy since at least WWII.
[203] Interestingly, Lord Ashcroft appears to plagiarise The Defence Estimates words verbatim (without attribution) in a speech in the House of Lords (HL Deb 19 May 2005 vol 672 cc 169)

threatening nuclear war was inherently morally wrong- with consequentialist logic: [204] whatever is necessary for security is legitimate.[205]

However, using the security logic to rebut attacks on the cost of Trident was not entirely straightforward.[206] The argument depended on the UK public sharing the belief in the Soviet threat *and* that maintaining British nuclear weapons was the only sure method of defence. As the above showed, Thatcher's government put in a lot of discursive work to (re)securitize the Soviet Union, but this also contributed to solidifying in discourse the transcendental utility of deterrence in the form of *the nuclear peace correlation*.

Performing the UK's Nuclear Peace Correlation

One key rhetorical commonplace that buttresses the utility of nuclear deterrence in the UK discourse comes from the representation of the UK's nuclear weapons policy as having been successful in deterring the Soviet threat in the past. This reading of history, while contested was repeated axiomatically by Thatcher during the 1980s.[207] For example, "The truth is that possession of the nuclear deterrent has prevented not only nuclear war but also conventional war and to us, peace is precious beyond price. We are the true peace party. And the nuclear deterrent has not only kept the peace, but it will continue to preserve our independence." (Thatcher, 1984) The correlation was also stated with equal certainty in Conservative manifestos, for example, in 1983 it explained: "We Conservatives believe in upholding the policy of nuclear deterrence which has kept the peace of Europe—peace with freedom and justice—for a generation. Labour does not." (Conservative Party, 1983). The nuclear peace correlation

[204] For a famous example of deontic ethical critique, see the Church of England report, "The Church and the Bomb", advocating unilateral disarmament. Thatcher cites and rebuts the report's arguments in a speech to the Young Conservatives soon after (Thatcher, 1983a). Given that the Church of England was commonly referred to as "the Conservatives at Prayer" (Young, 1983, p. 1) hearing unilateral arguments coming from such a source threatened the conservative representation of unilateral disarmament as naïve and reckless.

[205] See (Lewis, 2006) for a textbook rebuttal to deontic critique to nuclear deterrence, but also Thatcher's articulation of the dilemmas of democratic nations cited above can be read as a rebuttal to the deontic critic.

[206] Although time does not permit me to examine the breadth of the pro-nuclearist discourse, as the costs spiralled the government had to defend Trident from criticism in the press from those who wanted to remain nuclear but to acquire a cheaper system (for example, Chalfont, 1980). While the security logic for nuclear weapons in general could be used against the anti-nuclearists, they also had to defend Trident from those advocating nuclear cruise missiles (HC Deb 12 Jun 1985 vol 80 cc982). All the defence ministers, (Pym, Nott and Heseltine) of the period represented Trident as "value for money" compared to other options, including cruise missiles and non-nuclear security (See for example, MoD, 1980, HC Deb 11 Mar 1982 vol 19 cc977,). Arguably, to help make the decision seem less expensive, the government (for example, MoD, 1980, HC Deb 29 Jan 1985 vol 72 cc134-135, HC Deb 13 June 1985 vol 80 cc1044) almost always represented the costs as a percentage per annum of the defence budget over the course of Trident's lifetime rather than in absolute terms (see for example, HC Deb 23 Jan 1985 vol 71 cc455-6). *The Times* frequently expressed concern regarding the costs (for example, Stanhope, 1982), and published op-eds from critical voices (Chalfont, 1980), but ultimately always supported Trident as the preferable nuclear option in its leaders.

[207] For example see Kennan's (1982) collected essays on nuclear weapons.

represented as a fact was also alluded to in Thatcher's aforementioned slogan: **"**a strong defence policy has *proved* to be the most effective peace policy" (Thatcher, 1987a; The Conservative Party, 1987) (my emphasis).

The nuclear deterrent can be presumed to be working within the UK official discourse because, as Thatcher (1985) explained to the US Congress, ""they [the Soviet Union] cannot conceive of a powerful nation not using its power for expansion or subversion", while Thatcher could not *conceive* of the Soviet Union *not* using its power for expansion or subversion. Indeed this assumption is ever present and usually unstated whenever the nuclear weapons correlation is mobilized by the government. In *The Statement on the Defence Estimates* (The Cabinet Office, 1980, p. 2) for example, the assumption that throughout all those years the Soviet Union was eager to attack is unspoken but necessary: "In the thirty-one years since its formation NATO has succeeded in deterring aggression."(The Cabinet Office, 1980, p. 8) The wider Thatcher, NATO, and the West's Cold War discourse joined the dots; the government's nuclear peace correlation need not articulate this reified assumption of whose aggression was deterred: the Soviet's.

Sometimes the Thatcher government expressed the nuclear peace correlation in more vague terms that they kept "stability" (see the White Paper by the MoD, 1980). For example, in a speech toasting the Chinese Premier, Thatcher represents nuclear weapons and the military balance as *"a necessary condition* for peace and stability between NATO and the Warsaw Pact countries" (Thatcher, 1979b) (my emphasis). The benefit of this representation is that it does not necessarily require an imminent threat from the Soviet Union to deter. The nuclear weapons serve more as a pre-emptive device that stops the Soviet Union getting "tempted" to over-run Europe. *The Defence Estimates* of 1987 (cited in Stuart, Croft & Williams, 1991, p.159) provides one of the more elaborate performances of the government's nuclear peace correlation:

> It is easy to forget that in the first half of this century the world was twice plunged into immensely destructive global conventional war, precipitated on both occasions by a state numerically weaker than the combination of states that faced it. In the last century Europe was torn asunder by several major wars. By contrast, in the 40 years since the end of the Second World War, 40 years of nuclear deterrence - there has been no war in Western Europe, either conventional or nuclear, in spite of deep ideological hostility between East and West.

We can see then that the solidity of the Soviet Union's aggressive, militaristic, expansionist identity (detailed above) is the necessary condition for the UK's Cold War nuclear peace correlation. The UK's nuclear weapons have presumed to have worked because it can be assumed that the Soviet Union would have invaded Europe if it believed it would not have suffered nuclear retribution. Taking Soviet aggressive intentions for granted when examining

the nuclear peace correlation has a long history in the West (Kennan, 1982; MccGwire, 1986a).[208] For the UK's nuclear weapons to be correlated with peace, the Soviet Union as the object of the UK's deterrence had to be successfully represented as expansionist now, and in history. Thus the UK's nuclear weapon policy's usefulness was intertwined with the successful production and reproduction of the Soviet's identity as the radical other (analysed above).

Representing Nuclear Weapons -: "Independent deterrents" or "Tools of Blackmail"?

The Soviets and the UK's collective identities are further reinforced by the representation of their nuclear weapons, and nuclear weapons policy. The UK's nuclear discourse studiously avoids describing the UK's nuclear weapons as "weapons". Indeed, the UK's 1980 White Paper (MoD, 1980) offers a *pièce de résistance* in *nukespeak*, which characterises nuclear security discourse. While the White Paper refers to nuclear weapons in the abstract, the UK does not possess nuclear weapons but instead: "independent nuclear forces", an "independent strategic nuclear force" and a "nuclear capability", comprising of "strategic and lower level components" a "British capability" a "deterrent insurance", "defence measures [...] in the nuclear field", "ultimate strategic capability" and "the Polaris force".[209], Moreover, according to the White Paper, the UK is not acquiring Britain's future nuclear weapons system but "Britain's future strategic force". These "forces" meanwhile are not threatening the Soviet's but instead built to meet the "Moscow Criterion"; a term that would not look out of place in an accounting textbook.

The Soviet Union's nuclear weapons themselves do not feature very frequently in the White Paper, though the representations of the policies the Soviet Union is deemed capable of (and that the UK must guard against), reinforce the peaceful- Self/ aggressive-Other dichotomy at the heart of Thatcher's *nuclear regime of truth*. The Soviets may be "tempted" to consider "a massive surprise attack", a so-called "bolt from the blue" attack on the UK, should the UK not maintain its strategic nuclear deterrent. According to the White Paper, this is "the harsh logic of deterrence" which requires that the nuclear decision maker should have the evident power to take his resistance all the way to the strategic level if the aggressor will not desist" (MoD, 1980, p. 7).

[208] For an excellent example of one who assumes Soviet intentions, see Wohlstetter (1961).Wohlstetter's classic article evaluating the efficacy of additional nuclear weapons in Europe and the nuclear umbrella analyses several variables in depth except his assumption that the Soviet Union wished to overrun Europe, which he devotes just one semi-sarcastic sentence that is central to his analysis that the US's nuclear umbrella had been effective: "It seems clear that the Russians do not find an American response hard to believe, since they have been deterred from taking over Europe by fear of this response, and not by moral scruples or an inability to overwhelm purely European defences" (1961, p. 290) (my emphasis). Wohlstetter was writing about the US's nuclear umbrella, but within British nuclear discourse under Thatcher, the UK's nuclear weapons played a "unique", "second centre of decision" role in upholding it.

[209] All these representations of the UK's nuclear weapons can be found (often more than once) in the White Paper 1980

Indeed, the White Paper's representations of Soviet Union's nuclear weapons constitute the Other as a "nuclear aggressor" waiting on permanent standby for an opportunity to attack. This reinforces White Paper's representation of the enemy subject which alternates between the abstract "an aggressor" and the concrete Soviet Union.[210] The White Paper does not distinguish between the abstract aggressor and the Soviet Union's intentions: they are both left as a morally absent, but rational, ever present-threat to the UK's security.

Importantly for the theoretical ambitions of this paper, the White Paper illustrate how the representations of the policies of the Self and the Other play an important role in stabilising the foreign policy identity nexus. The UK's representation of its nuclear weapons in nukespeak helps reconcile the UK's nuclear weapons policy with its peaceful identity: a "deterrent" sounds necessarily peaceful. Meanwhile its representation of the Soviet Union's weapons reinforced its radical other identity: only aggressive, merciless militaristic regime capable of a "bolt from the blue" attack or blackmail. Indeed, a thought experiment with the representation of the respective weapons systems provides instructive: consider if the UK White Paper claimed "The UK needs to maintain our tools of blackmail because the Soviet Union has met its "London Criterion" for deterring a "bolt from the blue" attack from Britain."

De-stabilising and Stabilising the Discourse: Representing US interventions

The above noted how Thatcher's Cold War discourse frequently articulates the Soviets as "aggressive" and the West as "peaceful" and "law abiding". Within the government's discourse the Soviet Union's actions in the developing world are represented as "invasions", "aggression", "brutal occupations", efforts at "gaining influence" (for example, Thatcher, 1985). This makes for a stable link between the Soviet's identity and its foreign policy. However, the UK and the West's positive signs potentially destabilised when they undertook seemingly similar foreign policy interventions in the developing world. Thatcher in general deals with this in two ways. First, when not confronted, the British Cold War discourse often conjures away disagreeable representations of history that might challenge the West's monopoly on morality. Speaking to Congress in 1985, Thatcher wipes clean America's various actions in Central America and in East Asia.

> Even against those who oppose and who would destroy our ideas, we plot no aggression. Of course, we are ready to fight the battle of ideas with all the vigour at our command, but we do not try to impose our system on others. We do not believe that

[210] The interchangeability of the Soviet Union for "an aggressor" The absence of any other nuclear weapon armed state in the White Paper indicates how the global problem of nuclear weapons that the UK had to manage through deterrence was, to all intents and purposes, synonymous with the Soviet Union.

> force should be the final arbiter in human affairs. We threaten no-one. Indeed, the Alliance has given a solemn assurance to the world—none of our weapons will be used except in response to attack. (Thatcher, 1985)

However, when directly confronted with questions comparing the US's international military action to the Soviets, the UK government discourse is stabilised by representing the international military interventions as defensive actions. For example, when asked how the US's actions in Viet Nam were different to the Soviet's in Afghanistan, Thatcher's response is telling: "[…] The United States went in to *try to protect* South Vietnam against North Vietnam and Communism. But that was after the Geneva treaty. The two are totally and utterly different" (HC Deb Jan 28 1980 Vol 977Cc 935). Then, Thatcher complains that the press misrepresent the Afghan opposition to the Russians as "rebels" arguing they should be considered "freedom fighters".[211] This exchange illustrates perfectly how the British Cold War discourse reconciles Western military action with its peaceful identity: whenever and wherever the West fights communism it is "defensive", while whenever the Soviet Union supports communists, its actions constitute "aggression".[212] This way the UK discourse legitimizes, almost automatically, all military action against the Soviets (or communists), while naturally constituting all military action undertaken by Soviets (or communists) as illegitimate.

Instabilities in the Government's Nuclear Peace Correlation

However, as stable as the Soviet Union's aggressive identity and intentions were, Thatcher's government's discourse did occasionally hint at the fallibility of their nuclear peace correlation. The White Paper of 1980 (MoD, 1980, p. 7) explaining the need for Trident destabilises the nuclear peace correlation in its efforts to stabilize its usually unmentioned problem of whether nuclear weapons were the only thing holding the Soviet Union from military aggression or nuclear blackmail against Europe: "The Potential consequences of any East-West war in the nuclear age are so immense that some deterrent insurance against even remote possibilities for its outbreak is warranted". Here, the White Paper gets to the crutch that is glossed over in

[211] In retrospect , Thatcher illustrates that freedom fighters may not always turn to terrorists in the "blink of an eye"(Der Derrian, 2005, p. 25) it can sometimes take a couple of decades.

[212] This stabilising move often manifested itself in the mainstream press. For example reporting on the Nicaraguan revolution, *The Times* leader (*The Times*, 1985) reports how "radical" critiques from Western Europeans point to similarities between the US's support for the Contras and Port Mining with the Soviet Union's intervention in Afghanistan. However, replicating Thatcher's logic above, *The Times* defends the actions on the grounds that: "Self-determination is a concept which carries many definitions. It is harder to respect if it is to be exercised by a Marxist elite that has for five years had its prime objective its own irreversible entrenchment in power" and concluding ominously: "The Sandinista [Nicaragua government] government has naturally supported the Soviet Union in Afghanistan. That tells its own story about the nature of the regime in Managua". The point is clear, some Others are so radically different and dangerous that normal principles do not apply; military action against Marxist regimes is legitimate because they are Marxist. Within the official foreign policy discourse and in the wider press, opposition to Marxism or communism trumped other norms, in this case, sovereignty and self-determination.

Thatcher's articulations: even if the Soviet Union threat is not omnipotent and ever present, but remote, the UK cannot afford to take its chances. It is perhaps no surprise that this more nuanced representation of the effects of the UK's nuclear weapons is found in the White Paper, which most of the public would not have read. Certainly the nuclear peace correlation would offer much less discursive power if it were phrased "There is a remote chance that nuclear weapons have kept the UK safe for the past 31 years".

The combination of the high stakes involved in nuclear decisions and the unprovability of deterrence put the opposition in an awkward position. They could not prove that nuclear weapons have not been necessary for the UK's security, let alone whether they would be needed in the future. Moreover, given the stakes are so high (according to Thatcher, the UK's liberty depends upon it) the burden of the impossible proof lay on the opposition. Labour MP Allaun complains that when the government claims: "Trident will safeguard the British people and their children into the distant uncertainties of the next century" that it "…had not an iota of evidence to support that claim." (HC Deb 29 Mar 1982 vol 21 cc24) However, exactly the same could be said for his claim that unilateral disarmament would ensure British security, except that Allaun had no non-nuclear peace correlation to mobilize. As the next chapter will discuss, the 21st Century Labour government would exploit this *transcendental* nature of nuclear deterrence and explicitly lay the burden of proof upon the anti-nuclearists.[213]

Concluding Thatcher's Nuclear Regime of Truth

Ultimately, Thatcher's nuclear policy/ identity nexus was internally stable and sufficiently externally stable to marginalise Labour's and the anti-nuclearists' discourses. (Buzan et al., 1998). Not only did Thatcher and her government manage to legitimize the acquisition of nuclear weapons but they also constituted a positive identity for the UK through their nuclear weapons policy performances. While the "social capital" of the government granted the Conservatives an institutional advantage in marginalizing the anti-nuclearist discourse, the government still needed to put in considerable discursive labour to fend off the opposition challenge. Indeed, analysing Thatcher's nuclear regime of truth using Hansen's nexus reveals several inter-connected discursive moves that were necessary to representing Trident as legitimate and desirable, thus providing the pre-conditions for its acquisition and maintenance.

[213] Tony Blair argued in his foreword to the 2006 White Paper outlining the reasons for renewing Trident: "They would need to prove that such a gesture would change the minds of hardliners and extremists in countries which are developing these nuclear capabilities. They would need to show that terrorists would be less likely to conspire against us with hostile governments because we had given up our nuclear weapons" (MoD, 2006, p. 2).

First, Thatcher's government performed the "disinventibility" representation of the nuclearist discourse which removed the ethical responsibility of aiming for a nuclear weapons free world (NWFW), legitimising the UK's nuclear management strategy of maintaining nuclear deterrence, while marginalising anti-nuclearists as utopian and naïve. Second, the government's representation of the Soviet Union's aggressive identity underpinned several aspects of the UK's nuclear discourse. Thatcher's government (re)securitized the Soviet Union drawing on the existing performative architecture to present a particularly threatening enemy other image of the Soviets in the present, in the past, and in the future. By presenting such an urgent threat the government legitimised the possession of such destructive weapons that it claimed it would ordinarily wish not to need. Moreover, the government's performance of the Soviet's threatening identity in the past allowed the government to constitute the *transcendental utility* of nuclear weapons as real, and thus represent acquiring Trident as necessary. This mobilisation of the nuclear peace correlation required that the UK public believe that the Soviet Union would have attacked Europe otherwise. The success of representing the nuclear peace correlation helped marginalise and discipline the Labour policy of non-nuclear security as naïve, reckless and dangerous. In addition, the UK's representation of the Soviet's spatial and temporal identity of expanding its arms faster than could be required for defence allowed the UK to pass ethical responsibility onto the Soviet Union for the nuclear arms race. Third, the UK's use of *nukespeak* in its representations of its weapons contra the vivid language of crime ("black-mail", "bolt from the blue") used to describe potential Soviet tactics, helped reconcile the weapons with the UK's peaceful identity and helped reinforce the radical/aggressive Soviet identity. Finally, the UK's nuclear weapons policy, and the security benefit it was represented to afford Europe allowed the UK to constitute itself as having privileged status *vis-à-vis* the other NATO states in the alliance. Thus, the question of whether it was security or status that motivated the UK's maintenance of nuclear weapons (chapter 3) would appear moot in Thatcher's nuclear weapons discourse: the two were mutually constitutive.

Regarding the enforceability of the policy, Thatcher's Cold War discourse started from a strong position, and while Thatcher's government made the most of a strong hand, the strength of the foreign-policy identity constellation was probably not decisive. Certainly, on balance, Labour lost the argument; their internal polling suggested that in the 1987 election the nuclear issue lost them five per cent of the vote (Freedman, 1999, p. 132). If one considers public support for a policy to be a measure of its legitimacy, then Thatcher's Cold War foreign policy discourse was successful. However, although the public support for nuclear weapons contributed to Thatcher's victory in two elections, Thatcher also received a patriotic bounce from the Falklands war, while

Labour's 1983 manifesto - nicknamed "The Longest Suicide Note in history" – also contributed to Labour's failure. Thus, Thatcher's government had a fair amount of leeway to enforce the policy should they have needed it, however, their nuclear foreign policy performances were sufficiently compelling that the nuclear policy became an electoral advantage rather than deadweight to carry. Not only did Thatcher succeed in presenting the renewal of Trident as desirable, legitimate, and enforceable, but the foreign policy performances would provide considerable discursive resources for the UK's nuclear foreign policy following the end of the Cold War (see Chapter 6).

Chapter 6

Blair's Nuclear Regime of Truth

I'm running out of demons. I'm running out of enemies. I'm down to Castro and Kim Il Sung.
- Colin Powell, Joint Chief of Staff, 1991

It seems obvious to me that we are the good guys and that they are not; it is therefore perfectly reasonable that we should have such weapons
- James Gray MP, 2007

The Interlude: Changing External Constraints

As the Cold War melted, new optimism abounded the international system regarding the prospect of eliminating nuclear weapons. The NPT was renewed indefinitely in 1995, requiring that all the NWS re-commit to nuclear disarmament, while several former vociferous critics of the treaty joined, most notably South Africa, Brazil, and Argentina. The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) was finalised and opened for business in 1996.[214] Meanwhile, Russia and the US signed The Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START), limiting the number of nuclear warheads on each side to 6000, a reduction of around 80 per cent on their Cold War numbers. Meanwhile, the duel-key nuclear weapons in NATO states in Europe were reduced from thousands to hundreds. These NATO and Russian cutbacks in their force levels, and the spirit of co-operation that led to a flurry of treaties being signed, became known as the "peace dividend". Meanwhile, the then British Prime Minister John Major presided over the UK's own peace dividend, which in the nuclear weapon realm led to the removal of all tactical nuclear missile systems: the removal of US-owned nuclear artillery from UK soil, the cancellation of the nuclear armed Tactical Air-Surface Missile (TASM), and the early withdrawal of the WE177 "free fall" nuclear bombs from service (McInnes, 1998). This sub-strategic nuclear weapon disarmament was completed in 1998, leaving the UK with its newly minted Trident-armed submarines as its sole nuclear weapons delivery system.

[214] Though, the optimism that greeted it has long since dissipated; it still lacks the requisite number of ratifications for it to come into force (including the US's).

While the end of the Cold War and its "peace dividend" offered a welcome opportunity to reduce military expenditure for the UK, the disintegration of a well understood enemy Other also created political problems for the military. Indeed, Nicholas Witney (1995; 1994), from the UK Ministry of Defence, writing for *Rand*, recognised early that finding a compelling Post-Cold War nuclear rationale would prove difficult.[215] Witney argued "A strong tactical position may mask a weak strategic one" (1995, p. 4). By strong tactical position, Witney meant a domestic consensus between Labour and the Conservatives behind keeping the UK's nuclear weapons. In 1989, Neil Kinnock the leader of the Labour party committed his party to multilateral disarmament,[216] and by 1992 Labour completed the move to the Conservative position of keeping the UK's nuclear weapons "for as long as others possessed them".[217] By the time Tony Blair rose to power, Labour's commitment to maintaining nuclear weapons could be found in bold face type on the front of their 1997 election manifesto (Lilleker, 2000). Meanwhile, the Conservative government's decision in the 1990s to cancel its plans for new tactical weapons, and give up its various sub-strategic nuclear weapons in the navy, army and air force(Chalmers, 1999), meant that the UK could make a convincing case for meeting (its interpretation of) the NPT Article IV obligations.[218] However, while in the short-term, maintaining the UK's nuclear weapons appeared unproblematic, Witney suggested finding a compelling long-term rationale in the absence of a well understood enemy could prove difficult, and ultimately put the UK's nuclear weapons possession in jeopardy.

Arguing that the end of the Cold War had "collapsed" the UK's traditional rationale, Witney did not expect that Conservative government's initial answer to the problem would be sufficient to

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[215] Not just for the UK, the Cold War created something of an identity crisis (or at least a crisis of purpose) for the security community, (Buzan & Hansen, 2009) the US [state] (Shapiro, 2012, p. 171) and France(Menon, 1995) and NATO (Williams & Neumann, 2000 indicate that if not a crisis, NATO reconfigured their identity drawing previously less emphasized discursive resources)

[216] These precise words could be found on the Labour Party Briefing Handbook in 1992 (cited in Witney, 1995. p.2). However, the process that led them there began earlier. Labour leader Neil Kinnock conceded at the party conference in 1989"I am not going to make the tactical argument for the unilateral abandonment of nuclear weapons without getting anything in return ever again, I will not do it. The majority of the party and the majority of the country don't expect me to" (cited in Scott, 2012, p. 117) See *The Guardian* (Carvel & Wintour, 1989) account for a more detail on Kinnock's speech.

[217] The Shadow Foreign Secretary wrote with the consent of the leadership that "We believe that Britain ought to remain as a participant in those negotiations until they are successfully and finally concluded with an agreement by all thermo-nuclear powers completely to eliminate these weapons." ("Labour's Retreat From Unilateralism," n.d.). Dr Julian Lewis ("Labour's Retreat From Unilateralism," n.d.) provides a partisan summary of the change in policy and the press coverage it garnered.

[218] Although, it should be noted that technically meeting the UK's reading of the loose terms of the Treaty are very easy indeed. As Nick Ritchie (2008, 2012) points out, the strength of the NPT rests on the NNWS believing that the NWS, including Britain, are meeting their obligations. Particularly in the NAM, many remain dissatisfied with the progress on disarmament, contributed to the stalemate in negotiations to add to the non-proliferation measures of the treaty.

justify the large scale investment it would require to renew Trident in the future. In 1993 the Conservative government's initial answer to the problem was put by Malcolm Rifkind the UK's Defence Minister in 1993: "[the UK's] future force structures and postures should take into careful account what has proved hitherto successful in maintaining stability in the presence of Russia's military strength" and going on "Having achieved a stable and secure system of war-prevention in the old War context, we should be in no hurry to throw away the benefits" (Cited in Acronym, 1998). This call for caution, fit well with his party's general attitude, and certainly sufficed to justify maintaining what was at the time a brand new nuclear submarine fleet (Trident). However "maintaining stability", according to Witney (1995), would be unlikely to provide the UK's nuclear weapons with the same legitimacy and urgency as protecting Europe from the threat of Soviet Union had previously. This worried Witney (1995, p. 5) who suggests: "The development, or emergence of a stronger rationale would seem necessary if eventual death-by-atrophy of the UK's nuclear capability is to be avoided".

The problem facing the UK that Witney identified was an early precursor to the second puzzle of my thesis: in the absence of the Soviet Union or any comparable representation of a threat to the UK, how has the UK government maintained a discourse that represented maintaining and renewing its nuclear weapons as necessary? The end of the UK's nuclear hostilities with Russia, precipitated by the dissolution of the Soviet Union, was formalized in 1994 with a de-targeting agreement with Russia (Clarke, 2004). Trident's submarines would continue to patrol CASD, but acknowledging the UK's lack of enemies, the missiles would not be aimed at any state in particular. Indeed, throughout the 1990s the UK's placid strategic security situation was acknowledged in the security community and in several government security papers (MoD, 2006). Critically for this thesis, the 2006 White Paper (MoD, 2006, p. 19) proposing nuclear renewal mirrors this consensus, albeit with a distinct temporal qualifier: "*Currently* no state has both the intent to threaten our vital interests and the capability to do so with nuclear weapons."

This change in the security context can be understood in Hansen's foreign policy/identity nexus as changing *external constraints*. The UK could no longer present the Soviet Union as a radical other to legitimize its maintenance of nuclear weapons. Meanwhile, the end of the Cold War also prompted a re-appraisal of the prospects for disarmament and achieving a nuclear weapons free world (NWFW): the nuclear weapons problem was reconstituted as solvable and calling for disarmament was reconstituted from a utopian past-time to one articulated by the NWS

themselves.[219] This was reflected in the NPT's indefinite extension in 1995, which the NNWS agreed to only on the condition that the NWS signed and ratified a concrete agreement to pursue concrete steps towards total nuclear disarmament. This was reinforced with the agreement at the2000 NPT Review Conference's final statement which committed by consensus the NWS to "an unequivocal undertaking to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals" (cited in Rauf, 2000).

While the changing international context seemed conducive to disarmament, Labour's defeats at the 1983 and 1987 elections have been mobilized as a powerful discursive resource for stigmatizing non-nuclear security within domestic politics. The policy of non-nuclear security or as it is known in the UK's political discourse, "unilateralist/unilateral disarmament", has become rhetorical commonplace that constitutes non-nuclear security as a timelessly "left wing", discredited and electorally toxic policy. Dr Julian Lewis MP, writing in 2009 gives an example of how this representation works: "in the 1980s, two general elections demonstrate the toxic effect of one-sided disarmament proposals on a party's prospects of gaining power" (Lewis, 2009; 2). Noting the timelessness of the his grammar, Lewis, conjures away in one swift sentence that the precise cause of the election defeats is impossible to determine, that the policy was poorly explained, and conditions have changed dramatically since the policy was enacted.[220]Meanwhile the *Daily Mail* in the run up to the Trident vote presents unilateral disarmament as the sole reason for Labour's defeats, and like Lewis, conjures away any possibility the UK's electorate may feel differently 25 years later: "in a sign of panic within Labour's high command, backbench MPs were last night warned against a return to the 1980s when the party lost successive elections over its unilateralist approach."(K. Walker, 2007) The Soviet Union's demise is also often mobilized as evidence that nuclear security was proven to be effective, for example, *The Times* leader explains: "Debate [about Trident] was muted because the outcome of the Cold War showed that the multilateralists rather than the unilateralists were right"(*The Times*, 2007).

219 Barack Obama's Prague Speech (2009) is probably the most famous and strongest expression of the 21st century NWS international nuclear disarmament goal. George Bush showed that this agenda remains fragile, but since the Cold War, the disarmament agenda has been on the ascendency in the NWS' and nuclear armed states' foreign policy discourse(s).

220 Certainly this toxicity is not quite as timeless as Lewis suggests. After all, Harold Wilson campaigned successfully on a disarmament ticket in 1964 using the slogan *It will not be independent and it will not be British and it will not deter*" Although Labour reneged on the promise once in office (Scott, 2005; Freedman, 1980), opposing nuclear weapons at the very least did not stop Labour from winning in the election (even if it is impossible to say whether it helped).

This version of history contributes to the disciplining of non-nuclear security, and to an emerging "unilateral taboo" in British politics.[221] According to Tannenwald (2005, p. 8), "a taboo is a particularly forceful kind of normative prohibition that is concerned with the protection of individuals and societies from behaviour that is defined or perceived to be dangerous not said, or not touched."[222] The taboo appears evident when Tony Blair (2010, p. 636), writes of his discussion with Gordon Brown before the Trident decision: "imagine standing up in the House of Commons and saying I've decided to scrap it. We're not going to say that, are we? In this instance caution, costly as it was, won the day." Taboos also constitute identity: they define who "we" are by what "we" do, or more precisely, do not do (2005, p. 45). As noted in Chapter 2, Ritchie (2010) argues that New Labour's support for nuclear weapons underpins their constitution of their identity as "strong on defence".[223] Conversely, this implies being a unilateralist constitutes an implied "weak on defence" Other. There is plenty to suggest that such taboo is developing in the UK and becomes most apparent when actors who might be expected to be receptive to nuclear disarmament discuss Trident.[224] Indeed, Labour's desperation to avoid being tarred with its "unilateralist" tag (and past) seems particularly acute.[225] Labour leader Ed Miliband, for example, answering a question at the party conference on nuclear weapons began by declaring "I am not a unilateralist. I am a multilateralist" (Miliband, quoted in Sparrow, 2012).[226] Meanwhile, a long term critic of Trident, the Former British General, Lord Ramsbotham (2013) hints at the old roots of the taboo, and its role in constituting identity, when he admitted that, "I suppose I have been slightly conditioned, I mean I wish to goodness there had not been that Alderson nuclear disarmament CND type thing, in the minds of people it puts people who are opposed to it in the *wrong camp*" (my emphasis).[227]

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[221] I recognise that this argument requires further elaboration and proof; if Tannenwald's compelling analyses of the "Nuclear taboo" represent the benchmark, then this topic would probably justify an article or three to do justice to. Indeed, I toyed with the idea of making it the topic of this thesis.

[222] For example The former Minister of the Armed Forces, Nick Harvey (2013b) MP, explained in a private interview how the Tories would absolutely not countenance including non-nuclear security as an option in the Trident Alternatives Review(The Cabinet Office, 2013)

[223] Variations on the strong on defence theme can be found throughout Labour's 1997 manifesto.

[224] While the poll results canvassing the British public are mixed, polls of Labour Party supporters consistently oppose Britain's maintenance of nuclear weapons; see for example the Guardian/ICM poll 2009.

[225] See Toynbee (2006), Beach (2013) and Lilleker (2000) for analysis of Labour's fear of their unilateral past. One could make a case that New Labour's identity is constituted through the *Othering* of Labour's 1980s past, rather like Waever (1996, pp. 121–122) argues EU constitutes its modern self in contrast to its violent past (A post-structural discourse analysis of New Labour's contemporary identity might make an interesting article).

[226] In an interview with *the Guardian*, Danny Alexander, second in command of the Liberal Democrats (another party with voter base somewhat sceptical to nuclear weapons), lays out a series of arguments against the like-for-like replacement of Trident, yet mirroring Miliband is careful to clarify that he "is not a unilateralist".

[227] Here Ramsbotham, traces the stigma of unilateralism to the anti-nuclear protest movement in the 1950s in which thousands protested outside Aldermaston, the UK's primary nuclear weapons research and development laboratory and factory. *Yes Prime Minister* makes fun of the taboo in 1986 when the Private Secretary to the Prime Minister shocked at hearing his new plan to cancel Trident retorts in horror, "But, Prime Minister...You're not a secret unilateralist?[!]" (Jay & Lynn, 1986) Ramsbotham might be considered an unlikely victim of the taboo; in the interview he made several arguments outlining the redundancy of the UK's nuclear weapons in the

Ramsbotham here traces the taboo to the protests in the 1950s, however, as the last paragraph indicates, it has picked up discursive power from Labour's election defeats in the 1980s. . Indeed, it is striking how in the UK in the 21st century, the debate has narrowed around how many nuclear weapons are necessary, even though the arguments many critical voices propose for less nuclear weapons, often lead more obviously to the conclusion that none would be better.[228] As one of the leading anti-nuclear academics, Johnson (2013) suggests, the non-nuclear option has become the "elephant in the room" nobody in mainstream politics wants to acknowledge.

Nonetheless, even if the leadership of mainstream political parties have converged around renewing a nuclear deterrent of some kind, the anti-nuclear discourse has not been completely silenced. The 21st century oppositional discourse, mostly found in the left-leaning members of the media, academia and obviously in the continuous whir of the residual anti-nuclear movement produced coherent if peripheral discourse against the UK's maintenance of nuclear weapons.[229] Briefly, the key representations making up the anti-nuclear position run as follows. First, nuclear weapons are a Cold War anachronism and useless and counterproductive for addressing 21st century security problems (terrorism, counter-insurgency, cyber warfare etc.).[230] Second, in light of this redundancy, Trident constitutes an enormous waste of money that could be better spent on other public goods (conventional forces, or hospitals, schools etc.). Third, it is hypocritical and counter-productive to renew Trident while pursuing anti-proliferation and disarmament policies.[231] Fourth, renewing the UK's nuclear weapons breaches the UK's obligations under Article VI of the NPT[232]. Fifth that the Trident serves to prop up Britain's status in the world rather than deter.[233] Finally, the familiar anti-nuclear remain about morality of possessing "weapons of mass destruction" and concerns about depending upon the

post-Cold War era (including affordability, refutation of the nuclear peace correlation, the redundancy to contemporary security problems) yet he does not advocate unilateral disarmament but an intermediary step.

[228] Des Browne, since leaving Parliament to become a Lord, has become a leading voice advocating for fewer submarines. Yet, in an op-ed in *The Telegraph* (Kearns & Browne, 2013) his arguments seem to point much more towards unilateral disarmament than merely less nuclear armed submarines. Nick Harvey MP wrote an op-ed that points towards unilateral disarmament but ends arguing for fewer submarines (Harvey, 2013a). When I interviewed him, he admitted that if he were a "benevolent dictator" he would get rid of the submarines, but Britain needed "weaning off" nuclear weapons first (Harvey, 2013b). This suggests that the opinion he expressed in his *opinion* editorial was muted by something, arguably the unilateral taboo.

[229] Booth and Barnaby (2006), includes several short essays outlining the military, moral, political, legal opposition to Trident renewal as well as essays arguing the opposite.

[230] See Field Marshall Lord Brammal, General Lord Ramsbotham and General Hugh Beach (2009)letter to *The Times* "The UK does not need a nuclear deterrent", for a concise example of this argument. Also see Ritchie (2009a) and Beach (2009).

[231] See MP Richard Burden's contribution to the Trident debate (HC Deb 14 Mar 2007 vol 458 cc 301) and Ritchie (2008)

[232] See for example, MP Jon Tricket (HC Deb 14 Mar 2007 vol 458 cc 331)

[233] Former leader of the Scottish Nationalist Party Alex Salmond cited *Yes Prime Minister (*Jay & Lynn, 1986*)* to make this argument in Parliament (HC Deb 14 Mar 2007 vol 458 cc 349),

US.[234] Many of these representations were performed by the vocal minority of backbench MPs who voted against the decision to begin the process of renewing Trident; however the access to mainstream public discourse in the UK has been relatively limited in the 21st century in the absence of any major party opposing nuclear weapons outright.

In sum, the end of the Cold War, and the new international acceptance of the goal of a nuclear weapons free world, and the stigmatization of "unilateralism" after Labour's election defeats, provided the New Labour[235] government with quite a broad bandwidth of possible policies; however none of them appeared easy to present as coherent. Renewing Trident would require a new security rationale to replace the Soviet threat, and this would need to be squared with the global disarmament agenda. This option was made easier by the subsiding of the anti-nuclear movement and the consensus among leadership of the two main parties. Meanwhile, disarmament would be easy to legitimize internationally but would require overcoming the unilateral taboo in domestic politics. Labour chose the former option: renewing nuclear weapons without the Soviet threat while promoting disarmament. The following chapter analyses how they performed a nuclear foreign policy discourse that made this possible.

New Labour's New Nuclear Regime of Truth

Although the UK policy elite might have been in consensus, as Jackson and Krebbs (2007, p.14) notes "political actors can rarely take tangible steps or advance policy positions without justifying those stances and behaviours - in short, without framing [for this thesis: discourse]". Indeed, Labour had to try to ward off a rebellion from its MPs still somewhat divided over the nuclear issue as evinced by the 87 Labour MPs who rebelled against the bill that set in motion the renewal of Trident. This thesis analyses how the UK successfully managed to produce a sufficiently coherent discourse by the time of renewal and overcome Witney's rationale problem, thus disciplining any serious re-emergence of anti-nuclear discourse in mainstream politics. However, the new foreign policy did not come without difficulties and this thesis will also seek to shed light on how the New Labour government sought to solve some of the problems its new nuclear weapons policy produced: reconciling its nuclear weapons renewal with its reputed dedication to a nuclear weapons free world, and the charges of hypocrisy

[234] For example, in the Trident debate in 2007, Claire Short MP expressed argued the nuclear weapons made the UK dependent upon the US (HC Deb 14 Mar 2007 vol 458 cc 364) while MP Jeremy Corbyn put made the legal and moral case against "weapons of mass destruction" HC Deb 14 Mar 2007 vol 458 cc 378-379)

[235] The 1990s and 21st incarnation of Labour attached the pre-prefix "New" to their in order to ostensibly differentiate themselves with the Labour of the 1980s.

levelled against its anti-proliferation stance. As the following will demonstrate, this required discursive gymnastics from the UK government to achieve a semblance of coherence.[236]

The rest of this chapter begins by analysing how the UK nuclear discourse responded to the changing external constraint: how the urgent nuclear problem of the Soviet Union has been replaced with the international security problem of proliferators, and how the UK's re-constitution of the nuclear problem from "disinventible" to complex but solvable, enables the renewal of Trident. The second section then analyses how the UK produces a positive identity for itself within this new discourse, specifically how it has sought to represent itself as the enlightened leader of the anti-nuclear movement and sought to define the movement's agenda on terms favourable to the UK. The third section analyses how the UK government represents its nuclear weapons as legitimate and desirable in this new context. In particular this section will focus on how the UK has produced a new legal logic of legitimacy for its nuclear weapons that supplements and supplants the former Security logic of legitimacy of the Cold War. Throughout, how the UK disciplines rival discourses will be analysed, before the section concludes by investigating some instabilities not covered in the other sections.

Replacing the Soviet Union: Sketching Others

Witney (1994) had worried that the long-term absence of present-day enemies would lead the UK's nuclear weapons to "death by atrophy", but he needn't have. While the White Paper that provided the rationale for renewing Trident in 2006 asserted that: "Currently no state has both the intent to threaten our vital interests and the capability to do so with nuclear weapons" (MoD, 2006), the post-Cold War cross-party consensus remained intact. Indeed, paradoxically, the end of the Cold War may have even helped the maintenance of British nuclear weapons. To begin with the end of the Cold War took the wind out of the anti-nuclearist movement: nuclear apocalypse no longer appeared to loom so large in the public imagination and this removed the urgency from the "nuclear problem" that the anti-nuclear movement relied upon to generate traction.[237] This meant the UK's new Trident fleet could continue to perform CASD largely off

[236] How far this positive identity found traction within NATO, the NPT and the rest of the world is an empirical question that sadly this thesis lacks space to accommodate.

[237] For example, Booth (1999b, pp. 55–56) writes of the UK's "Nuclear amnesia": "there has been very low interest in nuclear matters: this silence was deafening in the 1997 general election campaign the decade there has been a general lack of attention in the press, in public debate, and on TV and radio." Booth's qualitative assessment is backed up by opinion polls, IPSIS MORI polling indicated in 2001 that the number of people who named "disarmament of nuclear weapons" as "the most important issue facing Britain today" had declined from 41% in 1983 to between 0 and 2% at the turn of the 21st century (Gray, 2001, p. 238).
Moreover, members of the press reflects and perhaps compounds the lack attention, for example the Daily Mail scarcely covered the Trident vote on what they called an "update" except to report any potential internal unrest the policy caused in the Labour's party(*Mail Online*, 2007).

the political radar (Mort, 2002). But perhaps most importantly, the UK replaced the Soviet Union with an enemy that was far harder for the anti-nuclear discourse to take aim at.

When Campbell (1998) and Shapiro (2012, p. 171) argue that the absence of enemies causes ontological anxiety for the states and undermines the practices a well understood *radical other* make possible, they implicitly assume the state needs an Other of the present. However, as the next section will illustrate, the UK's government's 21st century nuclear Self, does not necessarily need a well-defined *radical other* of the present – the role played by the Soviet Union during the Cold War - to constitute its nuclear Self, nor to represent the maintenance of the UK's nuclear weapons as desirable. Instead, the UK's 21st century nuclear discourse mobilises 20th century history to produce dangerous - but often hypothetical and/or vague - enemy-Others whose threat to the UK is represented to exist almost exclusively in the "uncertain" future.

The Hypothetical Enemy: Sketching Threats

Unlike Thatcher's government in the Cold War which stressed the present and urgent threat of the Soviet Union, New Labour's nuclear discourse constitutes possible threatening Others in the future as the justification for the UK's nuclear weapons policy. The 1980 White Paper's Other—the Soviet Union—that justified the policy, rested very much in the present: "[T]here is for example a changed strategic balance and a much stronger and more versatile all-round Soviet military capability than before, wielded moreover with a growing adventurism highlighted in Afghanistan. It would be strange to regard the curtailment of our deterrent insurance as timely and appropriate now"(MoD, 1980, p. 22)In contrast, the various others of 2006 rest in a hypothetical space characterized by the White Paper as ominously uncertain:

> There is increasing uncertainty about the nature of future risks and challenges to UK security. Whereas during the Cold War the likely source of threats was well established, the position is more uncertain now and may be even less clear by the 2020s. Therefore we believe that our nuclear deterrent should retain our existing capability to deter threats anywhere in the world. (MoD, 2006, p. 22)

What those threats could be are only sketched out and rest heavily on the imagination of the reader to fill in the blanks. The UK does provide some help to any reader having difficulty imagining the enemies as the White Paper also sketches possible threats: North Korea and Iran. *The Times,* arguing in favour of Trident renewal presents a similar argument that takes for granted the threat these states pose: "Today that enemy is more difficult to identify, but may well come to include countries such as Iran and North Korea. To abandon our nuclear weapons in the naive hope that regimes like this will respond in the same way would be folly" (Smith, 2006).This has become a trope in pro-nuclear discourse: numerous examples of this argument are found in the Trident debate (see HC Deb 14 Mar 2007 vol 458 cc 305-390). Unlike during

the Cold War, when Thatcher represented the Soviet Union as intent upon aggression to Europe, the 21st century discourse rarely offers any explanation of why North Korea and Iran having nuclear weapons poses a threat to the UK. Instead, their mere (potential) possession of nuclear weapons is sufficient to require nuclear deterrence. Here we certainly see echoes of Gusterson and Waltz's ethnocentrism: the identity of these others as irrational and dangerous has become so embedded, that just uttering the names of countries can substitute for analysis of the threat (or lack thereof) they pose. Meanwhile, the possibility that the UK could be perceived as threatening seems unthinkable to many of the UK-nuclearists. As James Gray MP put it during the 2007 Trident debate: "It seems obvious to me that we are the good guys and that they are not; it is therefore perfectly reasonable that we should have such weapons." (HC Deb 14 Mar 2007 vol 458 cc 369)

These sketched threats in the White Paper also illustrates one reason why nuclear weapons are so sticky: as Chapter 4 argued, by the standards of conventional analysis, the list of what nuclear weapons can be said to have deterred, are deterring, and will deter in the future, is as long as your audience's imagination, and never proven. This quality granted the UK 2006 White Paper a vast, almost limitless space with which to construct enemies, deterred in the past, and enemies to be deterred in the future.

> It is not possible accurately to predict the global security environment over the next 20 to 50 years. On our current analysis, we *cannot rule out* the risk either that a major direct nuclear threat to the UK's vital interests will re-emerge or that new states will emerge that possess a more limited nuclear capability, but one that could pose a grave threat to our vital interests. Equally there is a risk that some countries might in future seek to sponsor nuclear terrorism from their soil (MoD, 2006, p. 6). (My emphasis)

Thus, while Witney predicted that the UK's lack of a concrete and widely accepted enemy would prove problematic for finding a compelling rationale, it actually permitted (at least one sense) the stabilisation of the UK's nuclear weapons discourse. As Chapter 5 indicated, the Cold War debate hinged on whether the UK's nuclear weapons kept it safe from the Soviet Union. While ultimately Thatcher won the nuclear elections, the vivid description of the threat of the Soviet Union put the contradictions of deterrence in focus for the general population: as Jim Hacker, in *Yes Prime Minister* put it "We'd only fight a nuclear war to defend ourselves how could we defend ourselves by committing suicide?"(Jay & Lynn, 1986)[238] The increased support of the

[238] This was a common argument, for example in Parliament MP Frank Allaun argued: "Let us consider the extreme case. Let us suppose that the Soviet Union decided to invade West Berlin, which I have no reason to believe it intends. Would British nuclear weapons stop that? We are told that these weapons would decimate Moscow and Leningrad. Would we do it? There was a cartoon in the New Statesman of John Bull holding a revolver to his head and saying to Russia "***If you advance, I will commit suicide***." Although we could damage

CND, as well as Labour's anti-nuclear policy at the time suggests this representation found currency (Croft, 1994). However, the advantage of the 21st century discourse is that it puts UK debate over the utility of the UK's nuclear weapons in the metaphysical realm of the future. Tony Blair's foreword in the White Paper (MoD, 2006, p. 5), offers a flawless example of how this temporal shift in the nuclear other generates its discursive power.

> Those who question this decision [to renew Trident] need to explain why disarmament by the UK would help our security. They would need to prove that such a gesture would change the minds of hardliners and extremists in countries which are developing these nuclear capabilities. They would need to show that terrorists would be less likely to conspire against us with hostile governments because we had given up our nuclear weapons. They would need to argue that the UK would be safer by giving up the deterrent and that our capacity to act would not be constrained by nuclear blackmail by others.

By placing the burden on the anti-nuclear discourse to prove something in the future, Blair sets the bar for nuclear at a level at what modern science would call impossible. Indeed, Tony Blair takes full advantage of the elasticity of nuclear deterrence discourse: with almost all other public policies one has to demonstrate the utility of policy: measure the effects, and decide whether its value for money etc. In contrast, Blair sets anti-nuclearists the task of proving that something that works by not being used, will not be needed to work by not being used in the future.

Much of the discursive power of the representation of "uncertainty" stems from Thatcher's successful performances of the nuclear peace correlation of the 1980s, which is frequently reproduced in the UK's 21st century nuclear discourse. The Parliamentary debate preceding Trident is full of examples of the nuclearists seeking to fix the nuclear peace correlation. For example, the shadow Defence Minister Liam Fox offers a good example: "The argument was never that the nuclear deterrent was designed to deter all threats, but that it was meant to deter nuclear blackmail and attack, which *it has certainly done*." *(*HC Deb 14 Mar 2007 vol 458 cc 395*)* (My emphasis). Meanwhile another MP goes further: "Had Margaret Thatcher not stood firm on the subject of cruise missiles outside Newbury, for example, I am clear that the Soviet Union would still be in existence today, and there is at least a risk that some parts of Western Europe would be dominated by that evil empire" *(*HC Deb 14 Mar 2007 vol 458 cc 369*)*. The 2006 White Paper offers an ambiguous peace correlation, but it is nonetheless certain that the UK's nuclear weapons have deterred something, even if it is unspecific about precisely what: "since 1956, the

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Russia, she could wipe us out. Would this help West Berlin or West Germany? On the contrary, they, too, would be incinerated. It would not matter much to them—to the dead—what kind of Government they possessed." *(*HC Deb 24 Jan 1980 vol 977 cc734*)*

nuclear deterrent has underpinned our ability to do so even in the most challenging circumstances [secure peace and security]. Over the last 50 years, it has been used only to deter acts of aggression against our vital interests" (p.6, and again on p.9).

Even members of the oppositional discourse reproduce the correlation when they argue that the UK no longer needs nuclear weapons because the Cold War is over. Alistair Carmichael MP is one example of many:

> We live in a very different world now, however. In the 1980s, during the Cold War, I was eventually persuaded to accept acquisition [...] I think that some justification for that position was provided by the progress that we made in the late 1980s and the 1990s, but, as I have said, the world today is very different. The threats to world security no longer come from superpower blocs; they come from regional conflicts, from rogue states and from cellular terrorist organisations. (HC Deb 14 Mar 2007 vol *458 cc 390*)[239]

This representation concedes the relevance of nuclear weapons to peace during the 1980s, and thus also inadvertently helps the pro-nuclearists successfully represent nuclear weapons as necessary to face "uncertainty". Indeed, this argument provides the discursive resources the rebuttal, as former Defence Minister Malcom Rifkind illustrates concisely: "Of course, the Cold War is over and the threat that we faced at that time is unlikely to reappear, but it is not guaranteed that it cannot reappear" (HC Deb 14 Mar 2007 vol *458 cc 345)*. These constructions – as they come from both the nuclearist and anti-nuclearists - suggest the transcendental quality of deterrence and the UK's nuclear peace correlation of the Cold War have begun to reify as a "fact" in UK nuclear discourse.[240]

This is important in the 21st century discourse because it underpins the representation that uncertainty should logically be met with nuclear weapons. When the 21st century discourse sketches threats of the future, the utility of nuclear weapons can be taken for granted. Under these assumptions that nuclear weapons worked in the past, the representation of "uncertainty"

[239] For another good example see this op-ed from long term nuclear critic, the late labour MP Robin Cook (2005) in *The Guardian*.

[240] The nuclear peace correlation was directly challenged by MP Michael Meacher in the debate, however in general most of the oppositional voices did not challenge it, and many reproduced it in a similar manner to Carmichael. Elsewhere, Rebecca Johnson's evidence to the Defence Select Committee also contests it: "But what, precisely, has Trident contributed to NATO's security and who has it deterred? Did it make a difference with former Yugoslavia or Iraq? Nuclear deterrence theory, which ignores the obvious lack of deterrent effect in Britain's recent conflicts, starting with Argentina in 1982, is a modern version of voodoo medicine. If one believes in it, there is little that rational argument and evidence can do to dissuade. Much of the time, this may be harmless, though witchdoctors can be expensive. But too often, such belief in the unverifiable, supernatural power of the rituals and quackery of voodoo lead the sick to reject more proven remedies or to become addicted to unhealthy "cures" that further weaken their abilities to counteract the genuine sickness." (2005, § 4)

to describe the future becomes a powerful argument in favour of the UK's nuclear weapons.[241] Hence Professor Gray could argue elliptically in his statement to the Defence Select Committee that history and uncertainty demand nuclear weapons: "in 2006, we can no more predict the strategic history of the 21st Century, than our predecessors in 1906 could predict what the 20th Century would bring" [and therefore Trident remains necessary].[242] Indeed, the nuclear peace correlation during the Cold War has become an axiom of common sense in 21st century British nuclear discourse that constitutes a key component of representations of Trident's desirability.

However, although deterring vague threats in the future provides the desirability of nuclear weapons, the 21st century nuclear discourse lacks the legitimacy successfully "securitized" threats can provide. Indeed, while replacing the Soviet Union with "uncertainty" and *sketched threats* helped produce a coherent representation of why the UK needed to maintain its nuclear weapons in the absence of an immediate enemy, it could have destabilised the New Labour's wider nuclear polices: its disarmament agenda, and anti-proliferation policy. The trouble is that the government's new nuclear weapons discourse produced a compelling, almost universal, rationale for all states to deal with uncertainty –independent of their geopolitical security situation: a point made by several anti-nuclearist MPs during the Trident debate (HC Deb 14 Mar 2007 Vol 458 Cc 303-390).

New Labour's discourse creates the problem of legitimizing its nuclear weapons internationally, while seeking to delegitimize acquisition of nuclear weapons by non-nuclear weapons states. I argue these vague threats of the future do not provide sufficient legitimacy for the UK's practice of maintaining its nuclear weapons, but rather constitute the mainstay of their desirability to the domestic audience. As the following sections will illustrate, the UK government develops new logics of legitimacy that compensate in the absence of an internationally recognised threat helping to stabilise this universal rationale problem. However, before addressing the new logics of legitimacy, the next section addresses how the UK nuclear discourse adapted to the other major change in the external constraints prompted the end of the Cold War: the reconstitution of the world's nuclear weapon problem.

[241] The representation of uncertainty used to imply nuclear weapons was (re)produced by several advocate of Trident in the commons debate HC Deb 14 Mar 2007 vol 458 cc 300-390).
[242] His quote is taken from Gray (2006), evidence submitted to the defence committee. This quote was selected to be included in the Select Committee on Defence Eighth Report, a parliamentary research paper provided to MPs before the Trident debate (The Defence Select Committee, 2006 para 97):

The New Nuclear Weapon Problem: Now Solvable

The Soviet Union's demise and the normalization of relations with the West destabilised the previous constitution of the global nuclear weapons problem. Although the anti-nuclear movement considered the "peace dividend" a disappointment,[243] its corollary disarmament initiatives induced a significant change in the international nuclear discourse. Chapter 5 illustrated how Thatcher's representation of nuclear weapons as "disinventable" led to the disciplining of those that wanted their abolishment and unilateral disarmament as "naive" and "reckless" and legitimized the UK's management strategies of deterrence and arms control. Moreover, the critical threat that nuclear weapons were reputed to pose Britain was represented as the ethical responsibility of the Soviet Union, whose aggressive identity and "excessive" military power were represented as casting a nuclear shadow over the "peaceful" and "defensive" UK and NATO. However, by the mid-1990s the UK had de-targeted its missiles from the Soviet Union and agreed in principle to the specific goal of achieving a nuclear weapons-free world. The problem of nuclear weapons from the 1980s became unstable: the UK could no longer blame the nuclear threat on the Soviets, nor was claiming that nuclear weapons were "disinventable" a diplomatically amenable justification for not taking disarmament seriously.

The UK government, together with the US, has since adapted their nuclear discourse to reconstitute the problem of nuclear weapons and begun to talk about the goal of achieving a nuclear weapons free world. The UK's new nuclear discourse explicitly rejects the "cannot be disinvented" representation, reconstituting the problem along temporal dimension – from permanent, to complex but solvable – that expands the bandwidth of possible policies beyond and away from merely the long-term management of the nuclear problem through deterrence and arms control (see Chapter 5). Gordon Brown's speech at Lancaster House to international nuclear weapons experts provides an exemplary representation of the policy implications this move permits:

> Sir Michael Quinlan, who sadly died last month, and for whose work we will always be grateful, argued thirty years ago - that nuclear weapons cannot be disinvented. Our task now, he said, "is to devise a system for living in peace and freedom while ensuring that nuclear weapons are never used, either to destroy or blackmail". That pragmatism was right for the dark days of the Cold War. But I believe we can and should now aim higher the only way to guarantee that our children and grandchildren will be free from the threat of nuclear war is to create a world in which countries can, with confidence, refuse

[243] Although the US and Russia made large cuts in their arsenals, thousands remained. While some of the other nuclear weapons states slimmed down their nuclear arsenals, none moved out of the nuclear business, and instead renewed and in some cases modernized their arsenals.

> to take up nuclear weapons in the knowledge that they will never be required. (Brown, 2009)

This creates obvious tension in the New Labour's nuclear weapons policy/identity nexus: if it represents the UK as dedicated to a nuclear weapons free world, and faces no obvious security threats, its own maintenance of nuclear weapons could destabilise the discourse. However, while the problem of nuclear weapons had become solvable, the UK split it into separate, but related issues requiring very different strategies for action. *The Road To 2010* (The Cabinet Office, 2009, p. 12), which sets out the UK's NPT policy agenda illustrates how the UK's Post-Cold War discourse divides the problem according new and old weapons, explaining: "Nuclear weapons cannot be disinvented. But collectively, the international community can and must create the confidence that would enable countries possessing nuclear weapons to disarm and avoid other states from seeking to develop new nuclear weapon capabilities". Thus, the nuclear weapons problem has been given new temporal identity: nuclear weapons might be disinventable but the world does not have to live with them forever and can solve the problem they pose.[244] Moreover, the new nuclear weapon problem is constituted as universal and requiring international co-operation to solve. However, while the international community has the responsibility to "create trust", to "enable" the nuclear weapons states to disarm of their own volition, the problem of proliferation, requires more urgent action.

The Urgent Proliferation Narrative

Indeed, the UK normalized the Russian nuclear weapons whilst constituting a new and pressing nuclear problem of proliferation, which it has sought to securitize on behalf of the world.[245] Gordon Brown (2009), speaking to the international nuclear community, explains the post-Cold War priorities as follows: "Once there were five nuclear powers, now there are nearly twice as many. There is a risk that there could be many more. Proliferation is our *immediate* concern and for that reason alone it is time to act" [my emphasis]. Noting the call for urgency, what the UK means by "act" is elaborated in *The Road to 2010* (The Cabinet Office, 2009, p. 8): "The issue of

[244] As the former disinventable representation suggests, but also what the classic nuclear weapons text of the 1980s "Living with nuclear weapons" (Harvard Nuclear Study Group, 1983) argues.

[245] This reconstitution and division of the nuclear problem further reinforces the UK's 21st century discourse's normalization of Russian nuclear weapons. By constituting the NWS nuclear collective problem as non-urgent, and explicitly acknowledging the NWS requirement for maintaining "credible deterrents", Browne's speech in particular rehabilitates and sanitizes the other nuclear weapons states' policies. The main beneficiary of this discursive move is Russia. Indeed, through representing all NWS's nuclear weapons as "deterrents", the 21st century nuclear discourse inter-textually grants their nuclear policy equal legitimacy in the discourse as the UK and its allies' nuclear policy. This is a far cry from Thatcher's nuclear discourse representation of the Soviet's weapons as indicative of their aggressive intent; certainly, as the last section suggested, Thatcher's government never referred to the Soviet nuclear weapons as "deterrents" but as weapons and tools to undertake "blackmail" or a "bolt from the blue attack".

proliferation is a great and immediate threat to global security" and later: "We must work purposefully towards the universality of the NPT and take robust action against those states, like Iran and North Korea, which seek to develop nuclear weapons" (2009, p. 34). By "robust action" it is reasonable to consider the UK meant the use of sanctions, as the UK and NATO successfully pushed for against Iran and has long enforced on North Korea, but also potentially military force (see the initial rationale for the Iraq war).[246] Indeed, Walker (2010, p. 459) suggests the Iraq war was illustrative of "a shift of emphasis in the UK government under [Blair's] leadership towards the politico-military practice of counter proliferation from the traditional diplomatic practice of non-proliferation".

The new constitution of the nuclear weapons problem does include the nuclear weapons of the NWS but the Labour discourse represents it as a separate, distinctly less threatening problem. The UK does not consider the immediate stimulus for disarmament to be the threat posed by the NWS arsenals but rather the reputed connection between progress in disarmament and success of the urgently required anti-proliferation initiatives.[247] Indeed, the Foreign Secretary Margaret Becket (2007) speaking to an international audience explains the UK's apparent motivation: " [NPT states] efforts on non-proliferation will be dangerously undermined if others believe - however unfairly - that the terms of the grand bargain have changed, that the nuclear weapon states have abandoned any commitment to disarmament". The Minister of Defence Des Browne (2008), speaking to the Conference on Disarmament, echoes Beckett's logic: that disarmament is important, but this importance stems from the threat of proliferation as much as any internal motivation: "Without this [progress on disarmament], we risk generating the perception that the Nuclear Weapons States are failing to fulfil their disarmament obligations and this will be used by some states as an excuse for their nuclear intransigence".

However, the New Labour discourse does not suggest that the same urgency should be applied to disarmament as proliferation. Instead, Browne (2008) envisions a gentler, slower process: "As part of our global efforts, we also hope to engage with other P5 states in other confidence-building measures on nuclear disarmament throughout this NPT Review Cycle. The aim here is to promote greater trust and confidence as a catalyst for further reductions in warheads - but without undermining the credibility of our existing nuclear deterrents." Thus, the proliferation part of the nuclear weapons problem constituted by the Labour nuclear weapons discourse

[246] Although lately the rationale has morphed into "liberating" and democratizing Iraq, the urgent rationale that Tony Blair used to persuade his cabinet was a now infamous dossier that suggested Iraq possessed WMD that could strike the UK within 45 minutes.
[247] The tension between the disarmament and proliferation agendas becomes explicit at each NPT review conference, particularly since the end of the Cold War.

required "immediate" and "robust" action. However, regarding the disarmament problem, the UK aims only to *hope to engage* and thus *promote trust* amongst the NWS, all without affecting the "credibility" of their nuclear weapons. *The Road to 2010* (The Cabinet Office, 2009, p. 12) suggests that the urge for disarmament should be left to the NWS' internal sense of duty: "This [disarmament] requires continued strategic and moral leadership from the five nuclear weapons states, including the UK".

These are just three examples, but the Labour nuclear discourse continually presents a narrative in which the problem of nuclear proliferation as a global threat that the international community must collectively take urgent tough action, while NWS disarmament is important but a necessarily complex and slow "step by step" political process over which the NWS have stewardship.[248] In short, we can see clearly how the UK's 21st century discourse divides the nuclear problem into the "urgent" and "dangerous" proliferators requiring immediate action from the international community, and the non-urgent NWS nuclear problem, which demands a gradual process of talking, but mainly because failing to do so might affect the chances of addressing the securitized proliferation problem.

The New Nuclear Geography: Global Society Self vs The Proliferating Other

The UK's new Post-Cold War imagined nuclear geography, like Thatcher's, also presents a divided international, but along radically different lines. Thatcher's nuclear discourse divided the world between the besieged but peaceful west and the militaristic, aggressive and thus threatening Soviet Other. However, as we saw above, by the 21st century, Russia has been brought into a "global society" and their nuclear weapons have been sanitized (like the West's) as "deterrents". They now enjoy a privileged position in the UK's 21st century discourse as one of the five "legal" nuclear weapons possessors under the NPT.[249] The 21st century world therefore looks very different. The UK's Post-Cold War nuclear geography constitutes a new Self to replace the West and a new Other replacing the Soviets: those living up to the rules and obligations of "global society" —constituting a global society Self—and various dangerous Others that threaten this newly constituted global society. Gordon Brown, speaking to nuclear experts from the IAEA, provides a lucid example of the new nuclear geography:

[248] This is the formulation that crops up repeatedly in NPT and UK government documents about how to achieve disarmament, and is oft repeated by the other NWS. For a strong anti-nuclear critique of the NWS's account of what "step by step" means in practice see Barrie & Caughley (2013).

[249] It should be noted that this habit is more evident in the speeches given to international audiences than in the White Paper. Indeed, in this document although the UK recognises Russia's nuclear weapons legality under the NPT, in the section referring to other states nuclear weapons, only the US and France's are referred to as "deterrents".

> As we learn from this experience of turning common purpose into common action in our shared global society, so I believe we can together seize this time of profound change to form for a generation, our generation, a new internationalism that is both hard-headed and progressive. It is a multilateralism built out of a commitment to the power of international cooperation and rejecting confrontation, it is founded on a belief in collaboration, not isolation, and it is driven forward by a conviction that what we achieve together will be far greater than what any of us can achieve on our own. It is this new spirit of progressive multilateralism that gives us hope that we can find within ourselves and together the moral courage and leadership I believe that the world now seeks. (Brown, 2009)

The UK's New Self: a "Model" Nuclear Weapons State

Within the UK's reconstitution of the nuclear problem divided between urgent proliferation problem and the less urgent disarmament problem - permits the UK to constitute a privileged identity for itself as a "leader" within this "global society". For example, in the speech quoted above Brown (2009) declares that "The UK is playing a leading role in tackling the nuclear challenges we face today". This constitution of the UK as the voice, leader and therefore definer of the international community or global society Self and its agenda is mirrored in all the major speeches given to international nuclear audiences[250]. Indeed this subject position echoes how the UK's nuclear weapons policy under Thatcher was represented to grant the UK a privileged identity within NATO and the West. However, while the UK's nuclear weapons gave it a "unique" security role in NATO, in the post-Cold War discourse, it is the UK's disarmament initiatives that provide the key to this new privileged identity. Indeed, throughout the addresses to international audiences Brown, Browne, and Beckett constitute the UK as a "model" nuclear weapon state and even a "disarmament laboratory". Thus when the UK calls for the others in the global society to show "courage" and "leadership" it is a call for the rest of the world to follow the UK's example.

Recalling that these speeches were given in the immediate aftermath of the UK beginning the renewal of its nuclear weapons for 40 more years it might seem rather optimistic for the UK to persuade its audience that it was indeed a "model" state and even a "disarmament laboratory" engaged in an earnest quest for a nuclear weapons free world. The UK's "model" nuclear weapons rests upon its construction of a nuclear narrative which allow the UK to frame itself in a positive light, and discipline, and *conjure away* alternative understandings of the world's *nuclear weapons problem*.

[250] Brown 2009, Beckett 2007, Browne 2008 are the key examples.

Defining the Agenda and the Other for the International Community

First, the UK seeks to lead the NPT agenda. In taking on the goal of a nuclear weapons free world, the UK appropriates the right to define the agenda on behalf of the international community. Indeed, Des Browne's speech seeks to conflate the widely accepted legitimacy associated with the goal of a NWFW and the UK's own vision: "The UK has a vision of a world free of nuclear weapons and, in partnership with everyone who shares that ambition, we intend to make further progress towards this vision in the coming years."(Browne, 2008) The possibility that one might share the vision of a nuclear weapons free world, without subscribing to the UK's agenda is conjured away as a possibility. Indeed, Gordon Brown (2009) puts the choice in black and white terms: "So I urge Iran, once again, to work *with us* rather than *against us* upon this. The opportunity to do so remains on the table and the choice is Iran's to make" [my emphasis]. The UK's NPT performances discipline alternative conceptions of the world: one can subscribe to the terms of the UK's vision of the international society Self, undertaking the UK-defined agenda created for the international community, or stand on the outside as a dangerous Other.

Discipline and Privilege

But what does disagreeing with the UK's agenda entail? As chapter 2 argues, every Self needs an Other. Following the UK's agenda entails joining the "us" of the global society: the "progressive", "moderate", "obligation meeting", "co-operative" and "peaceful" "moderate majority". Meanwhile the UK in the various speeches juxtaposes this Self, with the "defiant", "intransigent", "ideologically driven" proliferator-Others (Iran, North Korea, and Syria) that threaten "international security" and "stability". Internationally, the UK's performances fit within, and constitute only part of much wider, and growing proliferator threat discourse performed by "the West" and NATO[251] together with Security Studies, a field arguably in need of new threats[252] to occupy itself.[253]

[251]See Gusterson (1999b) and particularly Krause & Latham (1998) for a more detailed look at the West's new counter-proliferation discourse. As noted above, the physical practices both threatened and thus legitimised by this discourse can from recent history be assumed to include, sanctions by the UK and its allies in "global society", diplomatic exclusion, UN Security Council motions, and general negative media coverage. Krause and Latham (1998, p. 38) do not call it securitization but they point towards it: "As a result of these dynamics, since the mid-1990s Western policy-makers have possessed a way of reading the global security order that has transformed essentially contestable interpretations of danger ('how serious is the global proliferation threat, relative to other threats?') into 'objective' and incontestable facts regarding the sources of threat and insecurity in the international system (rogue states possessing WMDs constitute a clear and present danger to the West)."

[252] This at least might be the reading of the Domestic Politics explanation of nuclear proliferation which, as Sagan, explains holds that "nuclear weapons are not obvious or inevitable solutions to international security problems; instead, nuclear weapons programs are solutions looking for a problem to which to attach themselves"(1996, p. 65)

But the UK is also concerned to win over the non-proliferatory group of non-nuclear weapons states that might be sceptical of the UK's agenda. As we saw above, the UK seeks to securitize proliferators. Thus the level of urgency required to fight proliferation on behalf of the international community provides the security logic of legitimacy for the prioritizing of proliferation over disarmament of the NWS. All this, on behalf of the referent of the international community; the UK does not seek to securitize these states on behalf of itself but rather for "global stability". The government here has constituted the UK as in the subject position (the "we") of "global society" and attempts to establish its ethical responsibility to undertake urgent action against the nuclear problem of proliferation.

By establishing proliferation as the urgent problem facing global society, any state that disagrees with the UK's agenda for action gets a negatively differentiated inferior identity within the international community. Gordon Brown (2009), for example, offers a good example of how the UK disciplines divergence: *"*So as we stand together against those who would seek to threaten our security, and in some cases even our existence, I offer today a practical plan to deliver on pledges that have been made. Today I believe is a time for leadership and confidence and common purpose, *not for weakness, withdrawal or retreat"* [my emphasis]. If a state disagrees with the prioritizing of proliferation over disarmament, they become "weak" or in opposition to the NWFW the UK is working so hard to achieve.

Further, the UK government discourse disciplines potential accusations of hypocrisy at the UK's own nuclear weapons by suggesting that criticism of the UK policy plays into the hands of dangerous Others. As Margaret Beckett (2007) explains: "And if we do not [make progress with disarmament], we risk helping Iran and North Korea in their efforts to *muddy the water*, to turn the blame for their own nuclear intransigence back onto us. They can undermine our arguments for strong international action in support of the NPT by *painting us* as doing too little too late to fulfil our own obligations" [my emphasis]. Note the use of the words "paint" and "muddy the water", suggesting that accepting these arguments is to be duped by rhetoric. When in a domestic context, Beckett's disciplining becomes more forthright. When defending the decision to renew Trident from attacks of hypocrisy, Beckett's disciplines critical voices by conflating criticism for the UK's nuclear weapons with support for proliferation. One of many examples: "I

[253] David Mutimer (as cited in Krause & Latham, 1998, p. 39) reveals how only seven articles on proliferation were published between 1985 and 1989, the literature grew to nine articles between 1989 and 1991, and rose to fifty-six articles between 1991 and 1994. Although I do not have the data for the 21st century, given the anti-proliferation/disarmament standoff in the NPT since, it seems likely that it would be conservative to suggest that security studies attention is unlikely to have dwindled much since

regard it as dangerously irresponsible to use the excuse that the UK is retaining its weapons to justify others seeking to acquire them, and it runs the real risk of increasing the global nuclear threat, not reducing it" (HC Deb 14 Mar 2007 Vol 458 Cc 303). Here, those that criticize the UK's maintenance of nuclear weapons on the grounds that they legitimize proliferation are represented as supporters of proliferation.

Mid-Section Review: The Identity Nexus without the Policy

So far we have seen how the New Labour's foreign policy nexus' representation of the threats has changed: Russian nuclear weapons have been normalized and so the it relies on sketched threats and general uncertainty to explain the need to maintain nuclear weapons. Internationally the government discourse divides the nuclear problem by securitizing proliferation, while representing the NWS disarmament process as necessarily slow and complex. The nexus appears, at this point in the analysis, to be unstable. The UK's geo-strategically specific security threat of the Soviet Union, which legitimised Thatcher's nuclear policy, has disappeared. The UK has replaced it with a coherent explanation of how nuclear weapons are desirable in an uncertain world, but this clashes with how the 21st century government discourse now represents proliferators who want to pursue the same policy as an urgent threat to the "global society". This inconsistency is partially stabilised by the wider discursive economy of Western discourse, that constitutes many of the proliferators as "rogue states" and the UK and the West as peaceful and responsible (Gusterson, 1999b).[254] However, I hold that while this may serve to stabilise the UK's prioritisation of proliferators, the UK discourse would be unstable if its legitimacy rested solely on the weak universalist security rationale explained above. Thus, the UK still requires logic of legitimacy that can justify the maintenance of its nuclear weapons *as well as* its anti-proliferation and disarmament agenda.

Representing the UK's Nuclear Policy

While the UK government mobilises the security logic of legitimacy on behalf of "global society" for the robust measures it wishes to pursue against proliferation, the UK no longer stresses threats as the primary source of its legitimacy for its own possession of nuclear weapons. In contrast, the government has increasingly generated legitimacy for its nuclear weapons and reconciled them with their "progressive" identity, by drawing on the NPT. To supplement this legal legitimacy— one which Russia and China possess equally— the UK government has sought to create a quasi-legal *prefect* logic of legitimacy from which it constitutes its "model" identity.

[254] Even if one does not concede to Gusterson's argument that this discourse is ethnocentric, it is scarcely controversial to state that Iran and North Korea have long been constituted as dangerous, untrustworthy, irrational regimes by the Western states and media.

Finally, although not fitting well with Waever's definition of a security issue, the UK has cultivated a non-urgent security legitimacy for its nuclear weapons that remained elliptical whenever the UK addressed international audiences.[255] All of these logics of legitimacy combine to prop up the UK's unlikely identity as "model" nuclear weapon state.

The Legal Logic of Legitimacy's New Primacy

During the Cold War, the NPT remained in the background of the UK's nuclear discourse. It occasionally cropped up, but not as a pillar undergirding the legitimacy of the UK's nuclear weapons possession, rather as a well-meaning, but largely irrelevant institution with which to play lip service to. It is telling that in the UK's most prominent nuclear historian Lawrence Freedman's book *The History of Nuclear Weapons*, published in 1980, the NPT is not even mentioned, not even in the chapter called: "Arms Control" (Freedman, 1980). The UK's 1980 White Paper does mention the NPT, but the UK's nuclear legitimacy does not rest upon it. Rather than relying on the UK's interpretation of what the NPT permits, the UK provides a justification for why the UK's reading of the NPT's Article VI has legitimacy: the logic of security. The UK's reading of their precise obligations under the NPT have remained pretty stable from Thatcher to Blair (namely that they have no obligation to unilaterally disarm) but Thatcher's Cold War discourse provides a logic of legitimacy *for* the NPT's tolerance of its nuclear weapons states' weapons. The 1980 White Paper (MoD, 1980, p. 24) interprets Article VI to mean that:

> "[N]othing in the Non-proliferation Treaty requires the existing nuclear powers unilaterally to abandon or let decay their basic capabilities which are inescapably a key part of the established structure of global and particularly East/West security**,** *whose collapse would bring grave dangers for all nations*" [my emphasis].

While critics may have questioned the Thatcher government's representation of the UK's purported "key role" in the global East/West security dynamic, the global inter-subjective acceptance of the Cold War discourse nonetheless gave it resonance.[256] Given that the UK's weapons were assigned to NATO and NATO was at the forefront of the East/West divide, the UK could plausibly claim its weapons were significant, particularly in the absence of any NATO ally suggesting otherwise. Finally, the UK was perceived to have had legitimate and serious geo-

[255] I do not intend this as a critique, but rather that as paradoxical aside: nuclear weapons, once the primary object of security studies, could become normalized. Indeed, rather than a critique, it might better be viewed as an inverted proof of securitization; if a security issue is one that permits the breaking of the rules of politics, then a non-security issue can be anything that follows the normal rules, even issues with such an established connotation with security as nuclear weapons.

[256] Robin Cook (see Chapter 2) bemoans the government's pretensions on remaining a great power, while the additional utility UK's nuclear weapons offered to NATO were questioned by members of the security community (for example, Freedman, 1980).

specific security concerns of its own (in the shape of the Soviet Union), further granting its security rationale geo-specific legitimacy internationally.

Thus, the UK's Cold War security logic of legitimacy was internally and relatively accepted internationally, and while the legal logic of legitimacy might have provided a useful supplement, the UK barely mentioned the NPT in speeches this period *vis-à-vis* the Soviet threat. Furthermore, the UK's wider nuclear policy that constituted the nuclear problem as temporally almost timeless ("disinventable") and the UK's extremely limited anti-proliferation policy meant that the UK's security logic of legitimacy was not as vulnerable to accusations of hypocrisy as Labour's post-Cold War nuclear policy discourse. [257]

In contrast, by the time New Labour set about renewing Trident, the a security logic of legitimacy has been replaced by representations emphasising legitimacy stemming from the NPT. Instead the UK merely stresses that in meeting its (interpretation of) its obligations under the NPT the UK's possession is legitimate. The 2006 White Paper illustrates how security logic has been divorced from the NPT's legitimacy since the 1980 White Paper:

> The UK's retention of a nuclear deterrent is fully consistent with our international legal obligations. The NPT recognises the UK's status (along with that of the US, France, Russia and China) as a nuclear weapon State. The NPT remains the principal source of international legal obligation relating to the possession of nuclear weapons. We are fully compliant with all our NPT obligations, including those under Article I (prevention of further proliferation of nuclear weapon technology) and Article VI (disarmament). (MoD, 2006, p. 14)

The security logic of legitimacy for the NPT's designation of NWS's special status is notable by its absence.

The government's replacement of the urgent security logic with the legal logic and discursive practices of the NPT, together with the Government's advocacy of a gentle approach to the long-term problem of NWS disarmament, and its decision to put Trident to the vote (and thus follow normal parliamentary procedure), suggests how the UK's 21st century nuclear discourse *normalizes* its nuclear weapons maintenance.[258] Indeed, the slow long-term process envisioned for nuclear disarmament resembles the pace the UK tackles global poverty, and in going through parliament the UK's nuclear weapons decision goes through the same process any other new

[257] In the 1980 White Paper and speeches regarding nuclear weapons, Thatcher's government scarcely mention proliferation, let alone seek to securitize it.
[258] The Labour government also sought to highlight the transparency of its nuclear weapons programme (see next section); something again associated with normal policy decisions.

law. Equally, the legal tussling over the interpretation of the NPT could be likened to arguments over trade agreements. Indeed, the UK's 21st century nuclear discourse constitutes Trident as an ordinary political issue and receives similarly limited press coverage (see above).

Yet, as we saw above, the New Labour's moves to normalize its own nuclear weapons were not universally applied internationally. Along with just justifying the UK's possession and renewal, by the 2000s Labour has added the policy of "making progress towards a nuclear weapons free world" and promoting "robust" anti-proliferation policies to its nuclear weapons policy agenda. Again the UK relies heavily upon its status as an NWS in the NPT for reconciling these apparently contradictory policies. This new reliance on the NPT runs throughout the Labour nuclear discourse of the Post-Cold War period, but Beckett in the Commons debate provides the clearest example of how the UK relies on the NPT to make its possession of nuclear weapons compatible with its anti-proliferation policy:

> [T]here is no basis to suggest that we have done anything other than fully comply with our obligations under the NPT. Indeed—I say this to the House with some respect—I regard it as dangerous folly to equate our own record, as some have tried to do, with that of countries such as North Korea and Iran, which have stood or stand in clear breach of their obligations as non-nuclear weapon states under the NPT. There is no legal or moral equivalence between their position and ours. I would urge people, whatever other arguments they might use to oppose the motion, not to use that one, because it undermines the very basis of the treaty itself: that those recognised as non-nuclear weapon states should not seek to acquire nuclear weapons. (HC Deb 14 Mar 2007 Vol 458 Cc 303)

That Beckett does not try to use the Security Logic of legitimacy justify the UK's nuclear weapons here is unsurprising. If the level of threat a state faced was to become a criteria for the legitimate possession of nuclear weapons, or more precisely for not disarming, the UK would struggle to explain why its security position necessitated nuclear weapons more than Iran, North Korea and perhaps most countries in the world. As the above demonstrates, nuclear weapons are still represented as providing the UK with security benefits, but these security benefits no longer provide the primary logic of legitimacy for the UK's nuclear weapons maintenance. This new reliance on the NPT however is not unproblematic.

Gordon Brown Wrestles with Disarmament

Gordon Brown's speech provides a curious example of how the UK's legal logic of legitimacy for its nuclear maintenance suffers from internal instability and can prove quite difficult to reconcile with the NPT itself. The next passage from Brown's speech to Lancaster House is

quoted at length because in isolation it may appear so incoherent that the reader may assume that it was taken deliberately out of context:

> Article 6 of the Non-Proliferation Treaty specifically states that countries that do possess nuclear weapons agree to divest themselves over time. *No single nuclear weapon state can be expected to disarm unilaterally, but I know that people have been trying to abolish nuclear weapons almost since their invention in the 1940s*. Even in the Cold War when they were central to countries' defence planning, there were efforts to reduce their spread and indeed to initiate disarmament and then the introduction of the Non-Proliferation Treaty.
>
> In the 1980s Presidents Gorbachev and Reagan, leaders of the countries with by far the largest arsenal of nuclear weapons, discussed the abolition of their most powerful weapon. Every President of both parties in the United States since the 1960s has reaffirmed the Non-Proliferation Treaty*. If no single nuclear weapon state can be expected to disarm unilaterally, neither should it*, but step by step we have to transform the discussion of nuclear disarmament from one of platitudes to one of hard commitment. We have also to help create a new international system to ensure non-nuclear states acquire the new sources of energy that they want to have. [My emphasis] (Brown, 2009)

Brown provides a window into New Labour's attempts to reconcile its lack of disarmament with its new "model" identity. The first statement in italics refers to the NPT as the reason the UK could not be expected to disarm. The problem for Brown and the government is that while the NPT does not obligate unilateral disarmament, it certainly does not oppose it, and in fact, explicitly welcomes: "measures taken in the direction of nuclear disarmament" (NPT, 1968, preamble). This representation appears unstable: even accepting that the NPT does not obligate the UK to disarm unilaterally, there is nothing in the NPT to suggest the UK should not if it wanted to.

Moreover, Brown destabilises the foreign policy identity nexus internally. Given Labour represents the UK as a "disarmament laboratory", a "model" NWS, "dedicated a to a nuclear weapons free world" and suggests in every major speech during the period that it wants to "set an example", it might not be unreasonable for the other states to expect the UK to go non-nuclear. If a child goes to a school where he is not obligated to eat apples, but he loves apples and has the opportunity to eat one, the lack of an obligation to eat apples does not make sense to use as a reason why he would not eat an apple. Similarly if the rest of the world is expected to take seriously the UK government's representation of itself as dedicated to a nuclear weapons free world and disarmament, it requires a stabilizing logic beyond "not being obligated" to justify why it is not undertaking the action that it claims to be so keen on. Thus the NPT legal logic of legitimacy struggles to stabilize the UK's post-Cold War nuclear weapons policies of

disarmament and counter-proliferation in the absence of an inter-subjective understanding of a geo-specific security threat.

Indeed, the two critical passages of Browns' speech (italicized), are interesting as much for what they do not say as what they do say. The first leaves the reason why nuclear weapons states cannot be expected to disarm unilaterally unarticulated and elliptical. Thus Brown conjures away the problem of explaining why the NWS possession of nuclear weapons is legitimate while proliferators and non-nuclear weapons states potential possession is not. If Brown had articulated the reasons that the UK government stated in its 2006 White Paper, namely its security concerns about the future, this would have destabilized the UK discourse's anti-proliferation message and its normalization of NWS nuclear weapons. In the 2006 White Paper intended to persuade its domestic audience of the security need for nuclear weapons the UK listed, the "re-emergence of a nuclear threat" [read Russia], "new nuclear states" [North Korea and possibly Iran] , "nuclear terrorists" and above all general "uncertainty". If Brown had spelled out these concerns as specifically requiring the UK's nuclear weapons, then it would have destabilised his speech to the international audience. After all, all those security worries represented in the White Paper (MoD, 2006) apply to most states in the world, and while the NPT might legitimize the NWS's nuclear weapons, it does nothing to protect the other NNWS from nuclear weapons.

The second italicized statement offers a further window into the post-Cold War discourse's logic of legitimacy and how it stabilizes tension between its pro-nuclear disarmament agenda and its renewal of Trident. The "if" is the key word here, in that Brown appears to believe that he has already established that nuclear weapons states cannot be expected to disarm unilaterally, yet his proof appears either extremely ambiguous, or elliptical (see above). In addition to the NPT, the UK mobilizes a disarmament history to construct the nuclear weapons problem as timelessly difficult. Yet, it is not clear why the US and the Soviet's failure to disarm in the 1980s, or why people wanting to disarm for a long time, would provide evidence for why NWS in general cannot be expected to disarm now. However, Brown's story, in constituting the *difficulty* of disarmament (if not the nuclear weapon problem) as timeless, he conjures away how circumstances and context might affect the difficulty of disarmament for the individual NWS and also how disarmament would have – to borrow Walker's words - "idiosyncratic implications" for each nuclear weapons state (W. Walker, 2010, p. 448). Brown suggests that because disarmament was difficult in the past for NWS, these difficulties remain equal for all of them, now, and until the problem is solved. Ultimately, by constituting the process as necessarily

difficult and long-term the UK conjures away any agency in the decision to maintain its nuclear weapons.

Disciplining Unilateral Disarmament and Passing the Multilateral Buck

Indeed, although the UK constitutes itself as the "leader" of disarmament, the UK's 21st century discourse frequently represents itself as a well-meaning, but agency-less-victim of international structures. In every major nuclear speech of the period the UK refers to some kind of structure that holds the UK back from disarmament, taking the decision to disarm out of its own hands. For example, Des Browne (2008) refers to the international "security architecture" or lack thereof: "We all want to see the world become a much safer place. International security architecture, in the form of Treaties and initiatives, exists to help us achieve that objective. The international community has been active in bolstering that architecture. It has not completely stopped proliferation. Nor is it yet strong enough *to permit* immediate unilateral disarmament by any recognised Nuclear Weapon State. We need to do more" [my emphasis]. Meanwhile, Margaret Beckett (2007) sounds a melancholic note in outlining the UK's unfortunate predicament: "we would be very clear and up front that when the political conditions existed, we would give up our remaining nuclear weapons". Thus, the UK is represented as a willing disarmer, but one that is waiting for the international community to allow it to live out its disarmament dream. As Thatcher used to lay ethical responsibility for the arms race with the Soviet Union, with this discursive move the UK government divests ethical responsibility for its own nuclear weapons onto the international community for not yet taking the action needed to allow the UK to disarm. The New Labour government reinforces this by repeating ad-infinitum that "multilateral" disarmament is the only way to make progress on disarmament, thus disciplining unilateral disarmament.[259]

This disciplining of the possibility of unilateral disarmament and championing of multilateralism provides the foundation the required to enable the representation of the UK's privileged identity as a "model" nuclear weapons state. If unilateral disarmament was represented as viable, or in Brown's words "expected", the UK's proclamations about striving for a nuclear weapons free world would ring hollow. Furthermore, the assumptions behind multilateralism homogenize the NWS's security circumstances and their ethical responsibility for pursuing disarmament. In this context the UK pushes the *counting bombs* narrative as the criteria for measuring the extent to which the NWS have lived up to their NPT obligations. This narrative, analysed in the next section, facilitates the UK to represent itself as a "model" nuclear

[259] The Road to The 2010 (The Cabinet Office, 2009) uses a derivation of the word "multilateral" 32 times.

weapon state by presenting the UK's small nuclear arsenal relative to the other NWS as evidence for its representation of itself as having an especially enlightened disposition towards nuclear disarmament (even though few would claim it has the same military requirements as China, Russia, or the US in other areas). The next section will analyse how the representation of the necessity of multilateralism together with the counting bombs narrative supports the UK's new *Prefect* logic of legitimacy.

Prefect logic of legitimacy

In the British education system it remains common that students following the rules in exemplary fashion can become a "prefect", a position that grants them special privileges above the ordinary students. The UK's 21st century foreign policy discourse has produced a nascent nuclear logic of legitimacy similar to the British school prefect system. With the UK's reading of the NPT established in the UK's discourse as the primary source of legitimacy for nuclear weapons, and unilateral disarmament marginalised. The UK's 21st century discourse attempts to represent its nuclear history and various nuclear policies to constitute itself as a "responsible nuclear power", and thus one deserving of special privileges such as the legitimate possession of nuclear weapons. Complementing the *legal logic of legitimacy*, the *prefect logic of legitimacy* also provides the discursive resources for the UK to *seek status* as privileged and progressive "model" nuclear weapons state in contrast to the non-radical other NWS.

Counting Bombs Narrative

The first and most obvious criteria the UK uses to positively differentiate itself from the other nuclear weapons states I will call "the counting bombs" narrative. The nuclear counting bombs narrative began with the Soviet's first nuclear explosion, and onset of the arms race. The narrative has two sides, performed by both anti-nuclear and nuclearists respectively. The nuclearist side involves the military and members of the security community who count bombs and fire power to determine the strength of deterrence and the balance of forces, and so on. When these analysts count bombs they consider more to be advantageous. On the other hand NGOs also perform the counting bombs narrative but inversely: they attribute blame for the nuclear weapons problem proportionally according to how many nuclear weapons a state possesses of the total. The UK government had little to gain from either counting bombs narrative during the Cold War when security discourse dominated. However, since disarmament began to be taken serious, the counting bombs narrative has increasingly been mobilised in the NPT discourse since the end of the Cold War, particularly by New Labour.

In contrast to during the Cold War, when the UK government sought to stress how much destructive power, and thus security, its relatively small force could provide—bang for buck if you will— in the Post-Cold War era the UK in the 21st century generates legitimacy from representing its small force as a symbol of its enlightened identity and dedication to a nuclear weapons free world (Duncanson & Eschle, 2008). For example, back in 1980 the government's White Paper (MoD, 1980, p. 3) boasts that: "The nuclear strengths of Britain [...] may seem modest by comparison with the superpower armouries, but the damage they could inflict is in absolute terms immense"; and that: "A single Polaris submarine carries more explosive power than all the munitions used in World War II" (MoD, 1980, p. 4). The UK government here represents destructive power of its nuclear weapons as their key positive value. By 2006, in contrast, the UK is much less anxious to remind the audience of its nuclear weapons destructive power and instead now turns the relatively smaller number of nuclear bombs into a positive. Tony Blair, in his foreword to the 2006 White Paper, shows how the UK now seeks to generate ethical kudos from the relative smallness of its nuclear forces:

> We already have the smallest stockpile of nuclear warheads among the recognised nuclear weapons States, and are the only one to have reduced to a single deterrent system. In this White Paper we are announcing a further 20 per cent cut in our operationally available warheads. This leaves the deterrent fully functioning, with fewer than 160 warheads, but it means Britain continues to set an example for others to follow in our commitment to work towards a peaceful, fairer and safer world without nuclear weapons. (MoD, 2006, p. 5)

The counting bombs narrative extolled above has several obvious and mutually reinforcing advantages for the UK. First, it lays ethical responsibility for the problem of nuclear weapons and disarmament upon Russia and the US (as they have by far the most). Second, it facilitates the constitution of the UK as the most "forward leaning" nuclear weapons state through the process of negative differentiation with the other NWS.[260] Third, it deflects attention from analysis of the security situations of the countries; instead, it assumes they are all locked in a sort of equidistant five-way security dilemma, and thus one which can only be escaped through multilateral disarmament.

Regarding the first point, the UK never explicitly locates responsibility for the nuclear weapons problem with the former superpowers, but this is a welcome side effect of the counting bombs narrative. The 2006 White Paper demonstrates how the counting bomb narrative grants the UK a privileged position vis-à-vis the other NWS, who are indirectly constituted as more

[260] See Simpson (2009), The "Forward Leaning" Nuclear State: The UK and Nuclear Weapons in an Era of Strategic Uncertainties

responsible for the nuclear weapons problem: "The UK's nuclear deterrent now accounts for less than 1% of the global inventory of nuclear weapons, and our stockpile is the smallest of those owned by the five nuclear weapon States recognised under the Nuclear Non- Proliferation Treaty" (MoD, 2006, p. 12). So when Beckett (2007) declares: "There are still over 20 000 warheads in the world. And the US and Russia hold about 96 per cent of them" she does not need to directly accuse these states to imply where the responsibility for the nuclear disarmament lies. But these quotes also show how the counting bombs narrative not only deflects ethical responsibility onto the other NWS but also how it allows the UK to perform a privileged identity. Thus it is not just a narrative that the UK uses to avoid blame, but one with which it seeks to *gain* credit, and thus *seek status*. When the goal is disarmament, having the least bombs makes a state the best, and permits the UK to constitute itself as a "role model" for other NWS (The Foreign & Commonwealth Office, 2009).

But the UK's counting bomb narrative not only deflects attention onto the other nuclear weapons states and allows the UK to seek diplomatic credit, but it also permits New Labour to represent its nuclear weapons as so small as to be *irrelevant.* Margaret Beckett (2007) in her Carnegie speech illustrates how the counting bombs narrative works to divorce the UK's nuclear weapons from the current nuclear disarmament problem: "when it will be *useful* to include in any negotiations the one per cent of the world's nuclear weapons that belong to the UK, we will willingly do so" [my emphasis]. Browne (2008) and Brown (2009) both repeat Beckett's representation that the UK would be ready to disarm when it became "useful". Now by suggesting that the UK will disarm *when* it is "useful", the UK thus implies that if the UK disarmed now it would be *useless:* namely that the UK's nuclear weapons do not contribute in any meaningful way to its representation of the 21st century global nuclear weapons problem: divesting the UK completely of ethical responsibility.

Minimum Deterrence & the Counting Bombs Narrative

The UK's Post-Cold War *counting bombs* narrative is reinforced by the UK's use of the *nukespeak* term "minimum deterrent". The White Paper (MoD, 2006) refers eight times to its nuclear weapons as "a minimum deterrent" and provides scant description of the level of destruction that this entails. For example: "the UK will retain only the minimum amount of destructive power required to achieve our deterrence objectives" (MoD, 2006, p. 17). When the 2006 White Paper discusses what this requires, it expresses it in terms of numbers of missiles and warheads that would be "sufficient" (MoD, 2006, p. 23). This is fairly standard nukespeak in that it hides the destruction it describes beneath bureaucratic language. However when compared to the 1980 White Paper, it is clear that the representation of the UK's nuclear weapons'

destructiveness serves an almost opposite purpose. The UK had a minimum deterrence doctrine in Thatcher's era, but now it is presented as a selling point. Hence, in the 1980 White Paper the term "minimum deterrent" is barely mentioned. Instead the nuclear force's relatively small size is mentioned only in conjunction with descriptions of its impressive power (e.g. "massive threat" or "immense damage").

These differing representations of the nuclear policy belie the changing way in which the UK has sought to perform a positive identity with its nuclear weapons. During the Cold War the UK's nuclear weapons were represented as key to European security, a vital "distinctive" and necessarily powerful force keeping the ever-malign Soviet Union at bay. This fitted with the UK's constitution of itself as a leading, particularly militarily-strong member of NATO, and thus kept the identity/foreign-policy constellation stable. By the 21st century, the UK and NATO have stated that they have no significant enemy to deter and so to maintain the UK's "peaceful", "responsible" identity they have sought to play down the destructive power of their nuclear weapons force.[261] The UK now generates positive ethical identity through a process of negative differentiation of its nuclear weapons policy and identity within the NWS, while conjuring away non-nuclear NATO states (and the rest of the NNWS).[262]

In addition to the *counting bombs narrative* the UK performs its "model" identity through representing various other disarmament-related policies as evidence. There is little need to go into detail but the UK lists a catalogue of limited disarmament initiatives in the 2006 White Paper and the *Road to 2010* policy paper, which it represents as evidence for the UK's "unequivocal undertaking to accomplish the total elimination of nuclear weapons"(MoD, 2006, p. 13). These include, "ground-breaking work on verification, building the UK's expertise in order to become a 'disarmament laboratory'" (The Cabinet Office, 2009, p. 31). [263]. The UK's "increased transparency, declaring historical records of our defence holdings of fissile material and placing excess military stocks under international safeguards"(2009, p. 32). The fact that the UK has "ha[s] not conducted a nuclear test explosion since 1991 and we ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty in 1998" (MoD, 2006, p. 13). What is noticeable about all these activities is that none significantly impede the UK's ability to perform continuous at sea

[261] This was the consensus among the experts on the Parliament Select committee meeting on the strategic context. This included both security experts and NGOs, The security professor Jeremy Stocker (2007a, p.9) reflects this consensus when he writes: "Now that the Cold War has ended and the Soviet Union is no more, Britain's security is assured to a degree probably unprecedented in its history".
[262] The UK's "model" identity would be seriously destabilised were the UK to juxtapose its nuclear weapons policy with the non-nuclear states.
[263] The representation of the UK as a "disarmament laboratory" was first coined by Margaret Beckett and was reproduced faithfully by both Brown(2009) and Browne (Browne, 2008)

deterrence, thereby maintaining nuclear weapons that can hit any capital city in the world.

Finally, the UK's Post-Cold War nuclear weapons discourse, reconstitutes the UK's long nuclear history of possessing nuclear weapons as evidence to support its claim to be a "responsible" nuclear weapons state. "Throughout [the nuclear era], the UK has proved itself a responsible steward of nuclear weapons, reducing our capability as circumstances have allowed. Consistently we have employed our nuclear forces strictly as a means to deter acts of aggression against our vital interests and have never sought to use them to coerce others." (MoD, 2006, p. 9) This logic, together with the New Labour's efforts to legitimise its possession through favourable representations of its disarmament initiatives, resembles very closely the logic legitimising the privileges a school boy receives as a prefect: good behaviour warrants special treatment. The UK suggests that that its responsible nuclear history legitimises its continued possession of nuclear weapons. However, the representations that underpin the prefect logic of legitimacy require the UK conjure away any alternative representations of the UK's past ethical responsibility for the nuclear weapons problem

Nukespeak: The Nuclear Insurance metaphor

This thesis seeks to theorize and demonstrate that the policy element of the identity policy nexus matters. The New Labour discourse constitutes the nuclear problem as "complex", but to represent the Trident as legitimate and desirable it must explain the function and utility of the UK's nuclear weapons to its population in both understandable language and in a way that is congruent with the UK's peaceful Self-identity. One way of making technically specialised language intelligible to the layman is through the use of metaphors that borrow from the audience's ordinary discursive economy (Lessl, 1989, p. 185). This echoes Edward Schiappa: (1989, p. 255):"The most persuasive metaphors are those drawn from ordinary language. Ordinary language embodies the common sense of a community of language users which includes the judgments, attitudes and feelings associated with certain words." However, it goes without saying that this process is not politically neutral. As Lakoff and Johnson (2003, p. 10) noted, the very process of "comprehend[ing] one aspect of a concept in terms of another will *necessarily hide other aspects* of the concept" (original emphasis).

The UK's nuclear discourse across both periods is saturated with both nukespeak and metaphors (or nukespeak-*metaphors*) which hide the destructiveness and therefore sanitize the

UK's nuclear weapons. [264] However the frequent use of the *nuclear weapons as insurance policy* metaphor stands out as exemplary. The safe, prudent, and harmless meanings associated with everyday insurance provides a clear example of how Schiappa (1989, p. 254) argued nukespeak can structure "reality in such a way to facilitate the integration of nuclear weapons into pre-existing thought patterns, and the acceptance of their existence and possible use". However, the use of the insurance metaphor, while a recurring, powerful discursive move, also offers an interesting window into the instabilities of the UK's nuclear weapons discourse from Thatcher to Blair.

Usage

The UK's nuclear submarines have performed continuous at sea deterrence since 1964. Throughout these periods, the government frequently referred to this practice as its "insurance" and sometimes its "insurance policy". Indeed, Thatcher's nuclear discourse is full of such instances; the 1980 White Paper (MoD, 1980, p. 7) uses the term three times in paragraph 15, explaining: "Exceptional readiness in the strategic nuclear forces is the most effective and least costly form of insurance against massive surprise attack". In the 2006 White Paper (MoD, 2006, p. 5) Tony Blair writes that: "We believe that an independent British nuclear deterrent is an essential part of our insurance against the uncertainties and risks of the future", meanwhile a subheading in the same document reads: "Insuring Against an Uncertain Future" (MoD, 2006, p. 18). The metaphor remains ever-popular in the current administration as the 2010 *Strategic Defence and Security Review* (The Cabinet Office, 2010) explains: "We will retain and renew our independent nuclear deterrent – the United Kingdom's ultimate *insurance policy* in this age of uncertainty" [my emphasis]. In sum the analogy of insurance has been performed by consecutive of governments of all the major parties in parallel to UK nuclear submarine's "continuous at sea deterrence". [265]

To understand how the insurance metaphor works to sanitize the UK nuclear weapons of their potentially destabilising meaning as a weapon of mass destruction, and ultimately domesticize, and normalize their existence, one must understand the common discursive economy from which it draws its inter-textual discursive power: the largely a-political, safe and sensible, economic discourse of financial industry and insurance policies. Insurance, according to the

[264] As Lakoff argues, metaphors are impossible to avoid, however awareness of how they affect our understanding of reality is necessary. I selected the insurance metaphor because it spans both discourses, recurring frequently, and rarely receives much attention from scholars nor government. If I had more space I would also have liked to deconstruct the "nuclear umbrella" metaphor that also straddles both discourses and has a similar banalifying effect on nuclear weapons discourse.

[265] And, it should be noted, the security community (Freedman, 1980; Hare, 2009; Willett, 2005) and sympathetic members of the press (see for example Riddell, 2006).

Oxford Dictionary is "an arrangement by which a company or the state undertakes to provide a guarantee of compensation for a specified loss, damage illness, or death in return for payment of a specified premium". Typically people in the UK take out insurance on their houses, cars, phones, their health and even their pet's health. But even ignoring the meaning of financial insurance the other common understanding of insurance, listed second on Oxford Dictionary as a "thing providing protection against a possible eventuality", also implies a similar idea of protecting against a possible eventuality to which one is but a passive receptor.

The UK's Nuclear Weapons: Independent from the Global Nuclear Weapons Problem

When one insures against the rain by carrying an umbrella, another popular nuclear metaphor, it has precisely zero effect on the chances of it raining. Similarly when one takes out house insurance, the chances of your house suffering from a natural disaster remain constant. The insurance metaphor produces an essentially passive and harmless meaning for its nuclear weapons and thus feeds into UK's governments' representations of its Self-identity as necessarily "peaceful" and "non-threatening" and helps stabilise the UK's lack of ethical responsibility for the nuclear weapons problem. The UK's use of "insurance" appears to be a clear example of "domestication strategy" in which a safe sounding metaphors are used to render potentially violent or controversial objects or actions benign (Schiappa, 1989).

Yet this representation of passivity, external to the problems of nuclear weapons, was unstable in the 1980s and in the 2000s. By the UK's own logic, its nuclear weapons must threaten someone, and if any state shared a similar security logic to the UK, then surely they do. For example, the government's representation that the possibility that North Korea may develop nuclear weapons that can reach Europe justifies its own nuclear weapons. Yet the UK's insurance metaphor *conjures away* that the UK's own nuclear weapons already have the ability to hit North Korea (and every country on the planet).[266] Moreover, the 2006 White Paper stresses the difficulty of predicting the next 40 years and the possibility that the intentions of a nuclear-armed state may turn malign, and yet, conversely, there is equally no certainty that the UK's intentions may not change in such the same manner within that period. In fact, in North Korea's case, it would be remarkable if they did not already consider the UK's intentions as malign. After all, it is currently one member of an alliance that: 1) until 1991 provided nuclear weapons to South Korea (North Korea's long term enemy); 2) is part of a group of states applying sanctions against North Korea; and 3) has persistently urged the international community to coerce North Korea into giving up its own "ultimate insurance policy". Finally, the

[266] The UK's nuclear weapons traverse the seas 24 hours a day undetected, and can fire 100kt nuclear weapons 11,000km to within 100m

UK's foreign policy performances provide good reason for states to fear the UK's nuclear weapons: in the 2006 government White Paper (MoD, 2006, p. 6) those nuclear weapons patrolling are said "to deter us and the international community from taking the action required to maintain regional and global security." Given that in the last decade alone "maintaining global stability", has entailed the UK military action against several other states,[267] and that between 1946 and 2003 the UK fought more wars than any other state,[268] it would be remarkable if all states shared the belief that the UK's nuclear weapons are as peaceful, harmless and passive as "insurance" implies.

Moreover, whether one takes out insurance does not affect your neighbour's calculations about their need for insurance. The notion that the UK's nuclear weapons could be considered independent of, passive and irrelevant to the Soviet Union is even harder to countenance. The UK had all its missiles trained on the Soviet Union, while its whole nuclear strategy for 30 years during the Cold War was built upon the premise of ensuring the UK could fulfil the "Moscow Criterion" (another bureaucratizing nukespeak term). Moreover, when the UK agreed to upgrade its missiles from the C4 to the much more accurate D5 missiles, the UK also adopted technology that in security-speak gave the UK "a first strike capability" (Mort, 2002). While attempting to get into the head of decision makers is a fool's game, it would be bizarre to claim the UK's nuclear forces were entirely absent from the Soviet governments calculations. One again the insurance metaphor serves to hide any potential antagonism the UK's maintenance of its nuclear weapons may cause in the international.

Deterring or Insuring?

One of the other key common representations in the UK's discourse, the nuclear peace correlation, is in obvious tension with the UK's insurance metaphor. Insurance does not alter the chances of something happening, yet the whole premise of nuclear deterrence depends on convincing another actor not to do something they would otherwise do (Freedman, 2004). Indeed the frequent formulation of the nuclear weapons having kept the UK safe for X number of years during the Cold War relies on the notion that the Soviet Union was continuously itching to invade. Yet, if one is constantly using an umbrella, then it ceases to be insurance and is instead just being used. Indeed, insurance gets activated only if a (usually) unlikely event happens. By using the term insurance the UK appears to destabilize the 1980's representation of nuclear weapons continuously deterring the Soviet threat.

[267] The UK was a leading participant in the Afghanistan and Iraq wars, while it was amongst the first to call for military action against Colonel Gadhafi's Libyan government.

[268] This statistic was calculated by the University of British Columbia, Canada, *Human Security Report 2005: war and peace in the 21st century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 3 Cited in Ritchie (2011, p. 373)

Filing an Insurance Claim vs. Nuclear Retaliation

Insurance cannot keep a house safe from fire, it can only compensate in the event of a fire. Indeed, if one compares what happens when you use your insurance in the typical sense, with when nuclear insurance is required then the analogy appears even more misleading. In the event activating insurance in the conventional sense, it compensates for the eventuality you were hoping to avoid. In the event that the UK had activated its nuclear "insurance", in the 1980s the UK would have initiated a nuclear war and thus faced the prospect of millions of civilian casualties. Meanwhile, in the Post-Cold War period the UK has suggested it may use its nuclear weapons to respond to a terrorist attack (as the UK has suggested in the 2006 White Paper). If the UK followed through on this promise and thus used its nuclear "insurance policy", it would likely lead to the indiscriminate death of thousands. Therefore in both periods the notion of insurance serves to marginalise and conjure away the likely effects that using nuclear weapons would wreak.

Stopping the Proliferation of Insurance Policies

The insurance analogy works better in the 21st century with regard to the uncertainty it is said to guard against, however under inspection, it would appear to destabilise the legitimacy of the UK's increased anti-proliferation efforts. By 2006 the UK no longer claimed that its nuclear weapons stood between it and an ever-present existential threat (MoD, 2006) but rather against the possible threats of the next 40 years. This is much closer to the common understanding of insurance. However it becomes unstable when one considers the wider nuclear policy of vigorous anti-proliferation policies.[269] Actors who take out insurance of any kind do not have a problem with other states taking out the same insurance. This however, could not be further from the UK's nuclear weapons anti-proliferation policy, which is dedicated towards stopping other states from acquiring their own nuclear insurance. The instability of the UK's insurance representation is illustrated by inserting the metaphor into a typical anti-proliferation statement from the UK's 21st century nuclear discourse: "We must work purposefully towards the universality of the NPT and take robust action against those states, like Iran and North Korea, which seek to develop *insurance against the uncertainties of the future*."[270]

Finally, the representation of nuclear weapons as insurance has a disciplining effect on rival nuclear discourses. By commandeering the associations of "prudence", "common sense" and

[269] See pages 32-33 of the 2006 White Paper (MoD, 2006) for details.
[270] The quote derives from The Road to the 2010 (The Cabinet Office, 2009), however I exchanged "nuclear weapons" for "insurance against uncertainties of the future".

passive pragmatism that are generated by the word insurance, the government implies that those that would give up the UK's nuclear weapons are reckless, short-termist, and perhaps even dim. If the UK's nuclear weapons really are "*the ultimate insurance policy*" against the unknown future then any alternative policy becomes cast as inferior. Now, if the insurance metaphor was relatively new and contested, it might not carry such weight. However, as the continuity between the two White Papers demonstrates, and the frequent usage amongst security scholars for the last 50 years backs up, this rather misleading metaphor has become embedded into the conventional security British nuclear weapons discourse, which reproduces it without comment (for an example from each period, see Freedman, 1980; Riddell, 2006).

Insuring the UK and Stabilising the Foreign Policy/Identity Nexus

The insurance analogy illustrates how the representations of the UK's nuclear weapons have helped reconcile the practice of maintaining nuclear weapons with the UK's peaceful identity and thus helped maintain the belief that its nuclear weapons are legitimate and desirable. Firstly it illustrates how the UK's nuclear weapons are represented as separate from the global issue of nuclear weapons, almost as though the UK's nuclear weapons exist in a vacuum. This fits with the UK's conception of itself as self-evidently peaceful, but also how the UK discourse conjures away how its actions may affect the decisions of others. Specifically, the insurance metaphor helps constitute the UK's nuclear weapons as separate from the dangers associated with the world's global nuclear weapons problem. However, the UK's insurance analogy destabilised the nuclear discourse, albeit in different ways across in each period: in the 1980s it was in tension with the representation of the how the UK's nuclear weapons were *deterring* the Soviets, while in 21st century it destabilised the UK's efforts to paint other states desire for nuclear weapons as illegitimate. Ultimately though, by helping to insulate the UK from any ethical responsibility the UK has for nuclear weapons problem globally, reconciling the destructiveness of the weapons with the UK's peaceful identity, and generating pragmatic and safe meanings for its nuclear weapons that serve to marginalize alternatives, the insurance metaphor has probably had overall a stabilizing effect on the UK's nuclear weapons foreign policy/identity nexus.

Instabilities in the Blair's Foreign Policy/Identity Nexus

When the UK's represents its nuclear weapons policy as providing a model for other states to follow, it relies on conjuring away the NNWS. Indeed, the government's representation that its nuclear weapons were the "minimum necessary" to "insure against future uncertainties" together with the UK's lack of specific security threats, implies that the rest of the world lacks the "minimum". It is safe to say that Blair did not intend the 183 NNWS to follow the UK's

example and develop a fleet of four Trident armed nuclear submarines. Indeed, the UK's post-Cold War discourse "counting bombs " narrative can only function to produce a positive nuclear identity through differentiation with the other NPT approved NWS, while ignoring the rest of the world. Only through *conjuring away* the non-nuclear weapons states, and to a lesser extent the non-NPT approved nuclear armed states (who all have inferior nuclear weapons to the UK) can the UK's reconcile its universalist nuclear rationale with its identity as a "model" nuclear weapons state that "leads by example".

New Labour's representation of its "minimum deterrent" that underpins both its model identity and its ethical credentials also appear unstable. The UK's foreign policy discourse provides several examples which indicate that its nuclear weapons force size have long been dictated by economic imperatives as much as strategic or now ethical imperatives. However, the UK's efforts to constitute itself as ethical through the counting bombs narrative is destabilised by its own minimum deterrence doctrine which indicates that the amount necessary to deter is much less than other deterrence doctrines suggest. This would appear to imply to any international observer that it is prudence rather than ethics that motivates the UK's decision to keep its nuclear force small. Thus, the government appears to want to generate a positive identity for its disarmament efforts that in the 2010 *Strategic Defence and Security Review* it explained "do not alter in any way" their nuclear weapons' effectiveness (MoD, 2010, p. 38). The counting bombs narrative, pushed by the government, may appear to the cynical international observer as an attempt by the UK government to have its cake and eat it. Indeed, the prevalence of this perception may help explain—as Margaret Beckett, (2007) among others have complained—why the UK's nuclear cut backs have elicited little international praise, and little reciprocated disarmament.

Concluding the UK's 21st Century Nuclear Regime of Truth

The UK's nuclear foreign policy/identity nexus became destabilised following the end of the Cold War and required several discursive modifications to enable the maintenance and renewal of its nuclear weapons system, Trident. The demise of the Soviet Union removed the threat that had: 1) legitimised the UK's nuclear weapons; 2) allowed the New Labour to divest ethical responsibility for the arms race; and 3) contributed to the ability of the UK to represent nuclear weapons as "disinventable" and thus de-legitimise nuclear disarmament. Michael MccGwire (2005) and the anti-nuclearist movement saw these developments as offering an opportunity for the UK to generate status by abolishing its nuclear weapons and leading the world out of the nuclear era. Indeed, the UK's New Labour government also saw this opportunity and constituted itself as the "leader" of global disarmament, however, somewhat ambitiously, they did not see it

as incompatible with renewing its nuclear weapons too. The UK government instead set itself a difficult challenge: trying to produce a stable foreign policy/identity constellation that included the policy of renewing its nuclear weapons, representing itself as a leader of disarmament, while also *securitizing* proliferation. It managed this through several discursive innovations.

First, Labour reconstituted the global nuclear weapons problem from "disinventable" to solvable but highly complex, whilst also dividing the issue between the urgent security threats posed by the non-NPT approved proliferators, and the non-urgent long-term problem posed by the NWS. Second, this complex problem of the NWS's was represented as their joint equal responsibility that they must act upon themselves. The New Labour discourse measures ethical responsibility for NWS' problem by *counting bombs*. This narrative conjures away differences between the security contexts of the NWS, the type of nuclear weapons possessed, and thus passes the ethical responsibility for the problem onto the other NWS for possessing more nuclear weapons than the UK. Third, using the counting bombs narrative, New Labour reconstitutes its minimum deterrence doctrine as an ethical nuclear weapons policy allowing it to constitute privileged status for itself amongst the NWS as a "model" state and "leader" of disarmament. Fourth, the UK seeks to *securitize* the other half of the new nuclear weapons problem: the proliferators. Unlike the NWS nuclear weapons, the proliferation problem demands urgent "robust" action by "global society". The UK government represents the failure of the global society to properly address this security threat so far as the reason for why it lacks the agency to abolish its own nuclear weapons. This move passed the ethical responsibility for the UK's own nuclear weapons policy onto the international community. Fifth, the New Labour replaces the void filled by the Soviet Union by taking advantage of nuclear weapons transcendental utility by *sketching threats* that the UK's nuclear weapons may be needed to deter in the future. The utility of nuclear weapons to address future threats generates discursive power from the performative reproduction of Thatcher's nuclear peace correlation that is beginning to reify in British nuclear discourse. This new rationale is virtually infallible on its own terms; however it lacks the urgency and the international legitimacy of the security discourse and, by virtue of its universal applicability, seemingly legitimises proliferation. Sixth, the UK stabilises this problem by supplementing its logic of legitimacy through emphasising the NPT; specifically, it now relies on a legal logic of legitimacy (derived from its disputed reading of the NPT) and a new *prefect logic of legitimacy* based on its representation of itself as a "responsible nuclear power" deserving of special privileges. Seventh, the UK's 21st century discourse, like its Cold War discourse, helps reconcile its maintenance of nuclear weapons with its peaceful identity by using domesticizing metaphors that normalize its possession of nuclear weapons.

Taken altogether, the UK's 21st century discourse has done something remarkable: by putting the renewal through (relatively) normal parliamentary procedures, emphasising the legality of its nuclear weapons (rather than their necessity for security), reconstituting the nuclear weapon problem of the NWS as non-urgent, the 21st century UK nuclear weapons discourse has taken an issue once almost the definition of a "Security" issue and *normalized* it.

As noted above, this foreign policy identity constellation is highly unstable, particularly the UK's efforts to seek status and get recognition as a leader of nuclear disarmament. Nonetheless, the UK's nuclear policy was and is certainly enforceable. Indeed, New Labour had a large amount of domestic leeway regarding domestic enforceability: 1) the could count on the Conservative Party's support for renewal; 2) the nuclear issue had a greatly reduced salience in everyday politics and so the inconsistencies in the discourse received little mainstream attention, and while opponents existed, they lacked the social position to challenge the government ; and 3) the UK economy was still booming when the initial decision was being mooted, muting the normal criticism UK governments receive whenever the cost of its nuclear weapons arise. However, although the UK will have no problem enforcing the policy, the jury remains out on whether its discursive gymnastics will generate sufficient legitimacy for it not to worsen the NPT's anti-proliferation/disarmament stalemate. It seems rather optimistic to hope the international audience will let the UK eat its nuclear cake and swallow its disarmament rhetoric too.

Chapter 7

Conclusion: Breaking Down Britain's Nuclear Regime of Truth & Putting it Back Together Again

Atomic weapons are useful because of the stories people tell about them, the fears those stories inspire, and the actions by which people respond to those fears

- John Canaday, *The Nuclear Muse*, 2000

This chapter proceeds in the reverse order to which the objectives were laid out in the introduction: it begins by providing answers to empirical puzzles outlined in the introduction, keeps the theoretical implications sandwiched in the middle, and ends by outlining the practical implications of this investigation and evaluating the utility of problematizing the maintenance of nuclear weapons in other countries. As the last chapters should have made clear, the UK's nuclear regime of truth in the past and the present is a complex, interwoven assemblage of interdependent and mutually constitutive representations that taken together have made maintaining the UK's nuclear weapons possible.[271] Rather than focusing on just the representations of the UK's nuclear regime of truth(s), I took a holistic approach that analysed the relationships, interplay and imbrication between the various key representations. Borrowing from Dunne's humble epistemological goals, this analysis has led to several "reasonably informed conjectures" that I hazard can offer insight into the research question:

How have consecutive UK governments represented its purchase, renewal and maintenance of its strategic nuclear weapons system as legitimate, enforceable and desirable between the decision to purchase the first Trident nuclear weapons system in 1980 and the decision to begin renewal in 2007?

Chapter's 4, 5 & 6 illuminated several important changes and continuities in the UK's nuclear foreign policy discourse - from Thatcher and Blair - that facilitate(d) the acquisition,

[271] It also goes without saying that the themes and key representations from the UK's adapting regime of truth are imbricated to such a degree that none can be separated into causal factors. Moreover, given the limits of my discursive ontology and epistemology, I present these conclusions as only one, hopefully compelling reading of the UK's nuclear discourse.

maintenance and renewal of Trident. 1.) UK governments have consistently (re)constituted the international nuclear weapons problem(s) in a way that locates ethical responsibility with various *others* in the international rather than the UK 2.) UK governments have continuously performed an identity/foreign policy nexus that that conjures away any threatening meanings that others may attach to the UK's nuclear policy or history 3.) The UK has adapted its logic of legitimacy significantly: it has moved from security logic of legitimacy based upon the successful (re)*securitization* of the Soviet Union under Thatcher, to a legal logic of legitimacy dependent upon the NPT in the 21st century 4.) UK governments have sought to maximise positive outcomes from its nuclear weapons policy through seeking privileged status from its nuclear weapons policy: from the security benefits they are reported to have provided to NATO during the Cold War; while after the Cold War, the UK has mobilized the *counting bombs narrative* that facilitates their representation of their relatively small nuclear force as indicative of their dedication to a nuclear weapons free world. 5.) The two periods' foreign policy performances have produced a strong shared understanding that nuclear deterrence works. Thatcher's successful securitization of the Soviet Union produced a strong *nuclear peace correlation* during the Cold War, which remains a key performative resource for solidifying the transcendental utility of nuclear weapons in the British public sphere today. 6.) Finally, the UK's government discourse has continuously disciplined and marginalized the alternative policy of non-maintenance of nuclear weapons.

Maintaining the UK's Ethical Identity

The common theme across both Thatcher and Blair's nuclear discourses has been the passing of ethical responsibility for the nuclear weapons problem onto other states, and thus avoiding the ethical responsibility to disarm. During the Cold War Thatcher marginalised calls for disarmament by representing nuclear weapons as "disinventable" and thus disciplined calls for nuclear disarmament as "utopian" and "naïve". Meanwhile, her government's performance of the Soviet Union's aggressive and militaristic identity enabled the UK to pass responsibility for nuclear "arms race" to the Soviet Union during the 1980s. New Labour adapted to the end of the Cold War by re-constituting the nuclear weapons problem as divided between the urgent global security threat of proliferation, and the solvable but highly complex, and non-urgent problem of the NWS arsenals. The possibility of unilateral disarmament is marginalised by the championing of a multilateral disarmament agenda that homogenizes the NWS security situations, and produces a five-way security dilemma.[272] Further, while New Labour locates joint ethical

[272] The UK's championing of multilateral disarmament and disciplining unilateral disarmament may not come without costs to its anti-proliferation and disarmament agenda. Although it is beyond the scope of this thesis, the UK's policy of not giving up its nuclear weapons until everyone else has may be creating and producing "one

responsibility for solving the new nuclear weapons problem among the NWS, it passes the ethical responsibility onto the others by pushing the *counting bombs narrative* that measures responsibility by quantity of the number weapons possessed. However, New Labour also sought to *securitize* the problem of proliferators, and thus direct international attention onto this half of the global nuclear problem and away from the NWS disarmament.

Developing Nuclear Asperger Syndrome

Connected to the passing of ethical responsibility, the UK governments in both periods representation of its "peaceful" identity and foreign policy history underpin their representations of their nuclear weapons as unthreatening to other countries and thus distinct from the world's nuclear weapons problem. During the Cold War the UK frequently articulated a faith that the Soviet Union could not fear the UK's nuclear weapons, even though it formed its nuclear weapons policy around the "Moscow Criterion". Meanwhile New Labour's 21st century discourse displays a similar lack of empathy for the non-NATO states who might worry that the UK's Trident missiles might one day seek to "maintain global stability" in their area. While Gusterson might suggest the UK's hypocrisy in opposing proliferation boils down to ethnocentrism, I would suggest the UK's nuclear weapons foreign policy/identity nexus is stabilised by a universal and reified lack of empathy for how its nuclear weapons may be perceived by other states. Rather than ethnocentrism then, *Nuclear Asperger Syndrome* would be more apt description of how the UK reconciles its nuclear weapons with its anti-proliferation policy. [273] This *nuclear Asperger syndrome* is reinforced in the UK nuclear discourse through its domestic use of metaphors and passive and abstract language to refer to its nuclear weapons, and the language of crime to refer to its enemies' nuclear weapons. Throughout both periods the UK studiously avoids the term "weapon" to describe its own nuclear weapons, preferring

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way door norm" of entry into the nuclear club: that once you get nuclear weapons you automatically join a security dilemma that makes unilateral disarmament "not possible". Indeed, the UK's argument that it seeks a nuclear weapons free world, but will only give up its nuclear weapons when other states do, has begun to be mirrored the rhetoric of India. For example India's Former Prime Minister, Manmohan Singh (*PM Manmohan Singh proposes global 'no-first-use' convention on N-weapons,* 2014) reproduces the UK's *prefect logic* of legitimacy, representing India as a "responsible nuclear weapon state that remains committed to non-proliferation, India supports the idea of a nuclear-weapon-free world.." and further that "What is needed today is agreed multilateral framework that can involve all states possessing nuclear weapons". Investigating the UK's role as a "one way door" nuclear "norm entrepreneur", could offer a fruitful research project for those wishing to investigate the relatively under-examined development of "negative" or "perverse" norms in the international.

[273]Asperger syndrome (AS) is medical condition known as an "empathy disorder" (Dziobek et al., 2008, p. 464) Those with AS often cannot read social cues, and thus can come off as pushy, yet will often have little idea of how they are perceived. Other key characteristics of AS include: "fixated interests and repetitive behaviour which may include repetitive use of objects or phrases, stereotyped movements, and excessive attachment to routines, objects, or interest" (National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke, n.d.). While this metaphor – like all metaphors – is imperfect (people are born with AS, for example); I hold it does illuminate the UK's nuclear discourses' tendency to ignore how its nuclear weapons maintenance is perceived by many of the states in the international and specifically what might be considered an obsession with maintaining nuclear weapons on patrol at sea at all times.

instead “deterrent”, “insurance”, “umbrella” etc. This language embeds the notion within the UK discourse that its nuclear weapons are peaceful, insulating the UK discourse from how they might be perceived by the rest of the world.

Moving from Security to Legal Legitimacy

Avoiding responsibility for the nuclear weapons problem and the UK’s *nuclear Asperger syndrome* tells only part of the story. The government has also changed the logic of legitimacy for the maintenance of its nuclear weapons. During the Cold War Thatcher’s government performed a foreign policy that followed to the letter the grammar of *securitization*. They mobilised this security logic to override the normal rules of politics - moral and economic objections – and justify Trident on the grounds that nothing else could protect the UK from the geo-strategic specific threat of the Soviet Union. However, following the end of the Cold War, New has replaced the Soviet Union with *legal logic of legitimacy* reliant upon the UK’s representation of the NPT Article VI. The UK now performs a foreign policy that legitimizes all the NWS nuclear weapons possession, normalizing Russian nuclear weapons in the process. The UK builds upon NPT legal legitimacy by representing its nuclear weapons policy in the past as “responsible” and its participation in wider multilateral policies (reinforced by the counting bombs narrative) that allow the UK to perform the identity of a “model” nuclear weapons state. In the process the UK is fast developing a *prefect* logic of legitimacy for nuclear weapons possession that grants legitimacy and special privileges to the UK.

Seeking Status from Nuclear Weapons and Disarmament

Indeed, the most counter-intuitive insight from the last two chapters might be how New Labour’s nuclear weapons foreign policy sought status for disarmament, while simultaneously setting in motion the process of renewing its nuclear weapons for the next 40 years. Drawing on Hansen’s *degrees of otherness* theory of identity formation, Chapters 5 and 6 suggested that the UK has sought status from its nuclear weapons policy in two ways. The first does not surprise: Thatcher’s government represented the UK’s nuclear weapons as necessary to NATO’s defence of Europe, which allowed it to perform a privileged identity among its allies. The mutual constitution of security and status in this instance would suggest that the many scholars that have sought to separate security and status motivations for the UK’s nuclear weapons during the Thatcher period were burrowing down a dead end. Following the end of the Cold War the New Labour became rather muted about the security utility its nuclear weapons offer NATO. Instead the UK has sought to gain ethical kudos and a privileged status amongst the NWS as a “model”, “forward leaning” country working hard to “lead” the way to a nuclear weapons free world. This rather ambitious representation depends heavily on the UK’s *counting bombs*

narrative, its reading of the NPT, and in particular the UK's disciplining of the possibility of unilateral disarmament.

The UK's Nuclear Peace Correlation

The Thatcher government's successful performance of the security logic of legitimacy in the 1980s, and its successful representation that their nuclear weapons could have utility in the future, stems from the reification in British discourse of the *nuclear peace correlation*. Chapter 4 argued that due to the way nuclear deterrence works by not being used, nuclear weapons utility is always *transcendental.* Thatcher's government stabilised this potential problem through its vivid performances of the danger that the Soviet Union posed and had posed *throughout* its existence. The successful production of the Soviet Union's aggressive identity across time enabled Thatcher to claim that the UK's nuclear weapons had "proven to be the best peace policy". By producing the belief that the UK's nuclear weapons had kept Britain safe from the Soviets Thatcher could convincingly represent Labour's non-nuclear security as "naïve" and tantamount to "surrender", particularly in the absence of a concerted effort by Labour to challenge the Soviet Union's aggressive identity (see the 1983 & 1987 manifestos for examples). The nuclear peace correlation lives on in the 21st century discourse: whenever an anti-nuclearist argues that now "the Cold War is over the UK does not need nuclear weapons any more" they implicitly (re)produce the nuclear peace correlation. Indeed, the "nuclear peace" during the Cold War now serves as rhetorical commonplace that reifies nuclear weapons utility in the past. Accepting that nuclear weapons worked in the past is key to legitimising the UK government's decision to keep it to "insure" against uncertainty. Moreover, the *transcendental* utility of nuclear weapons permits a great deal of discursive flexibility in producing future enemies the UK's nuclear weapons can be represented to be needed to deter.

The UK's nuclear peace correlation offers a clue to the broad first puzzle of the introduction: how does the UK maintain the belief that its nuclear weapons are necessary to security, when most countries seem nonplussed. The UK's nuclear peace correlation – strong during the Cold War, weak thereafter – began in 1952, thus the UK has barely experienced the nuclear era without nuclear weapons. UK governments (reinforced to a significant extent by the media) produced and (re)produced threats that the UK has to worry about throughout that period. The UK's nuclear weapons have long been represented as an important part of dealing with those various threats. Due to the transcendental nature of nuclear deterrence, this can never be proven or disproved, but regardless, a gradually developing "snowball" effect correlating peace with the UK's nuclear weapons has developed. In contrast, and I offer this hypothesis hesitantly, the other non-nuclear weapons states experience a *snowballing* non-nuclear peace correlation,

characterised by governments representing threats and dealing with them without nuclear weapons. The longer governments deal with uncertainty in the nuclear era without nuclear weapons, the harder it becomes for any domestic nuclearist to convince their audience nuclear weapons are necessary for a country's security.[274]

Finally, the UK has continuously disciplined the possibility of non-nuclear security through the stigmatization of "unilateral disarmament". During Thatcher's discourse the "disinventability" representation of the nuclear weapons problem disciplined the disarmament advocates as "naive" and "utopian", while the securitization of the Soviet Union and the mobilisation of the *nuclear peace correlation* allowed Thatcher to represent disarmament as "dangerous" too. Meanwhile, the both governments represented its nuclear weapons as "insurance", privileging the pro-nuclear voices as prudent, while implying that those favouring non-nuclear security are reckless. The 21st century discourse continues to discipline "unilateralism" through the championing of "multilateral disarmament" between the NWS. The UK's multilateral disarmament agenda includes only NWS, and so *conjures away* the rest of the non-nuclear world. This multilateral disarmament agenda allows the UK to present non-nuclear security as "not possible" and unreasonable, while the UK's *nuclear Asperger syndrome* helps it ignore the many countries who manage to *not to* maintain nuclear weapons. Finally, Thatcher's victories in the 1983 and 1987 elections have become an important discursive resource for disciplining non-nuclear security or "unilateral disarmament" as politically viable policy in domestic politics: limiting the bandwidth of policies thought possible for "credible" parties wishing to constitute themselves as "strong on defence".

Foreign Policy /Identity Nexus Theoretical Reflections

This thesis also had considerable theoretical ambitions, seeking to rebalance Hansen's original foreign policy nexus by rectifying what I suggested was a lopsided bias towards security crises and an under-theorization of policy representations. The modified nexus of Chapter 2 sought to enable the nexus to capture both a broader array of foreign policies with a greater degree of nuance. In particular, tailoring it to analyse how long-term foreign policies are maintained.

[274] Perhaps the most intriguing case involves the non-nuclear NATO states. Here the nuclear or non/nuclear peace correlation seems most vulnerable. While NWS periodically produce rationales that produce threats their nuclear weapons address, and provide rationales to justify the costs, the non-nuclear NATO states have no such requirement. Moreover, performing a foreign policy that implies dependency on other states' nuclear weapons may not appear particularly desirable for national governments. An investigation into how non-nuclear NATO states represent the relationship between NATO's "nuclear umbrella" and their security would offer insight into how far the peace correlation can stretch without a national government emphasising it, and provide an avenue for anti-nuclearist movements attempts to destabilise NATO's commitment to nuclear deterrence.

I suggested including a new category of desirability into the aim of foreign policy makers, and theorized a more flexible Weberian definition of legitimacy – as *whatever works* - that can better capture the nuance of foreign policy. Certainly, the Copenhagen school's security logic privileged by Hansen was sufficient to capture Thatcher's nuclear foreign policy: where desirability and legitimacy are mutually constitutive. However, as Chapter 6 illustrated, while the New Labour's post-Cold War discourse represents the desirability of nuclear weapons using security representations, it increasingly augments and arguably supplants it with *legal* and *prefect* logics of legitimacy based upon the NPT. This suggests developing separate if not always distinct categories for legitimacy and desirability offers utility for analysing foreign policies. Moreover, this Weberian definition of legitimacy further modifies the foreign policy nexus to better fit with post-structuralism principles. As Chapter 2 suggested, the framework one uses to analyse discourse should be as blank as possible: While admitting that just the category of "legitimacy" has content, the new flexible definition is *blanker* than Hansen's privileging of security logic. . This clarification should prove productive because it will allow the nexus to illuminate the majority of foreign policy undertaken *not* in periods of crisis or conflict.

In addition, separating legitimacy and desirability matters for long-term policy-makers because when a government is continuing a policy, the enforceability and legitimacy are normally to some extent accounted for. In the UK case the government in the 21st century were not merely seeking to find legitimate and enforceable nuclear policy; it sought to generate additional privileged status as a "model" nuclear weapons state. As the preceding chapters show, desirability can also be accommodated into the nexus through using Hansen's *degrees of otherness* conception of identity-construction, which can be used as a proxy for *status seeking.* For example, the UK's nuclear weapons policy during the Cold War represented the UK as having special status amongst its NATO allies due it its "distinct" and "unique" contribution of its nuclear weapons. Meanwhile, the post-Cold War discourse represents the UK as privileged "model" NWS, leading the other slower less enlightened states towards a nuclear weapons free world. As I suggested in Chapter 2, and as Chapter 6 and 7 illustrated, this approach can help overcome the nebulous nature of *status* in the international by offering an approach that can identify cases of status seeking. However, the second step –identifying recognition – is beyond the scope of this thesis. I would therefore suggest a fruitful avenue for further research would be to seek to combine the *degrees of otherness* method of identifying status seeking with a method (potentially post-structuralist, but not necessarily) of investigating recognition.

Finally I theorized in more depth the part that representations of policies plays in reconciling policy with identity. In particular this thesis drew on *nukespeak* and Lakoff to theorize how

policy makers can use language that *normalizes* their policies, and criminalize the policies of their enemies. While Chapters 5 and 6 demonstrated the utility of my mobilization of nukespeak and Lakoff, I do not want to suggest that these specific theories become routine for analysing the foreign policy/identity nexus. Instead, I only suggest that discourse analysts be aware of the danger of over emphasising the constructions of identity in understanding foreign policies; Ritchie's over emphasis on identity analysed in Chapter 3 illustrates the danger starkly when he takes the "weak" security case for UK nuclear weapons as a pre-discursive fact. Hansen's foreign policy/identity nexus does indeed recognise the importance of the representation of policy by emphasising its mutual constitution with identity. However, the bulk of her theoretical framework for analysis concerns analysing the complexity of identity. There now exists a vast and growing literature on collective identity's role in foreign policy that points scholars down this path too. Thus, the take-home theoretical point I would to make is rather humble: do not overlook the representations of policy, and instead seek out (or develop) theory that can illuminate the foreign policy discourse of each unique case.

Normative Application

To make the case for problematizing maintenance of nuclear weapons elsewhere, I will first follow Nietzsche's advice and seek to show how the empirical insights above can be used to help people practically achieve their ends (Cited in Jackson, 2011, p.123). At this point, I will put down my imaginary self-reflecting quill, put on my normative hat, and assume for moment that a nuclear weapons free world is desirable.[275] I argue now that the previous three chapters offer theoretically informed evidence for why the current international movement to introduce a comprehensive ban on nuclear weapons would – unlike the UK government and other sceptic's claims –help speed up the moves towards international disarmament.[276] They also allow for some reasonably informed conjectures regarding the bandwidth of possible policies the UK's current nuclear weapons discourse permits

In the last few years a growing coalition of states, ostensibly frustrated with the NWS (perceived lack of) disarmament progress, have begun to support a comprehensive treaty banning nuclear weapons. Currently, three quarters of states support such a treaty, and while NATO as a bloc remains opposed, several appear to be wavering (ICAN, n.d). The big question

[275] As both my ontology and Chapter 4 imply, I do not suggest that this definitively the "right" direction for the world, only that these suggestions should prove instrumentally useful for the many anti- nuclearists in the world that inter-subjectively share this view.

[276] I also offer this practical advice as a riposte to the common critique that post-structuralism is always de-constructive rather than constructive. In laying out "recommendations" I also seek to nod to the pragmatically minded conventional security community.

hanging over the scheme regards whether such a treaty would or could make any difference if it did not have the nuclear-weapon armed states' support (Hugo-Graff, 2013). Sceptics argue that without the NWS – which are also the P5 - on board it would be instrumentally powerless and thus pointless (Zeijden, & Snyder, 2014). However, this thesis' analysis suggests that a comprehensive ban would make it harder for the UK government to perform a nuclear policy that generated status and legitimacy, and thus more difficult to produce a discourse that enables maintenance.

Indeed, a ban would likely constitute a considerable discursive resource for the anti-nuclear agenda, even without the NWS involvement. Currently, without any alternative legal framework than the NPT, the UK can plausibly represent its nuclear weapons as legal. A comprehensive ban would not change this directly, but it would provide a legal framework that appeared obviously more suited to achieving the UK's own stated objective of achieving a nuclear weapons free world. Introducing a ban could enable what Jackson and Krebs (2007,p.3) call "rhetorical coercion" and leave the UK government "without access to the rhetorical materials needed to craft a socially sustainable rebuttal" ending up "compelled to endorse a stance they would otherwise reject." Given the UK's repeated proclamations that it is committed to disarmament, and the almost reified international consensus that disarmament is desirable, the UK may find it difficult to find the discursive resources to oppose a universal ban on nuclear weapons, once it entered into force. This would not in itself compel the UK to disarm, but it could destabilise in several ways the existing nuclear foreign policy discourse.

First, the UK governments' representation of its privileged identity as a "leader of disarmament" would be difficult to maintain if it a) stayed outside the treaty and/or b) opposed it or ignored it. Second, the UK's more sedimented identity as a "peaceful" "liberal" state may also become de-stabilised as the boundary between "illegal" NPT states, and "intransigent" nuclear armed states became blurred, providing the discursive resources for the UK to be "hailed" into the group identity of those rejecting the ban. Third, it would become harder to conjure away the non-nuclear weapons states and maintain the non-nuclear security (unilateralist) taboo if several of its European neighbours joined a legally binding treaty rejecting the possession of nuclear weapons under all circumstances. Again, offering a distinct "liberal" club to join rather than just a different category within the NPT would help stigmatize the UK's nuclear weapons in a way the NPT alone cannot. In general, the UK would find it harder to insulate its nuclear weapons from the world's nuclear weapons problem; the UK's nuclear weapons would constitute the reason why it could not join a treaty aiming for the elimination of all nuclear weapons, and so it

would find it difficult to represent the UK's nuclear disarmament as irrelevant to the disarmament agenda in the way it does now.

These predictions rest upon the implementation of a ban yet to be realised, nonetheless, this thesis can also provide some insights into the UK's current bandwidth of possible policies, *ceteris paribus*. The UK's current mainstream nuclear discourse has a deceptively narrow bandwidth of possibilities. This narrowness is reflected by how the policy debate of the three main parties involves squabbling over the specifications of the UK's nuclear weapons without making reference to the possibility of non-nuclear security. While a coherent oppositional discourse exists that proposes non-nuclear security, in terms of the political sphere (even though opinion polls suggest it has support of around 50 per cent), its proponents are limited to academics, trade unions, journalists, anti-nuclear NGOs and a few back-bench MPs. However, the UK's current economic difficulties could put the nuclear question onto the agenda again before the final decision whether to renew Trident is made. Although, the costs may politicize the UK's nuclear weapons, my analysis suggests that the battle will be won or lost over whether the UK's nuclear weapons provide security utility and constitute the identity "strong on defence". A brave politician could feasibly challenge this the unilateral taboo, but they would need to contest the representation of the nuclear peace (correlation) of the Cold War, and challenge the reified representation of nuclear weapons as timelessly toxic to a party's electoral chances. The discursive resources exist for this strategy; however, Britain's 21st century risk-averse politics makes it unlikely.

Unlike the maintenance its nuclear weapons, the UK's wider policy of seeking status from "leading disarmament" seems more vulnerable and unlikely to generate much recognition from its peers. Given most of the NNWS would like to quicken disarmament, it would appear counter-productive for them to recognise a the UK as a "leader" or a "model" after it had just renewed its nuclear weapons for 40 more years. Equally, it is difficult to foresee the NWS recognising the UK's status seeking given the UK's nuclear narrative leaves them with the ethical responsibility for disarmament. Further, if Trident was renewed, there would be no new large capital outlay needed for at least a decade and the UK's main parties would probably want to keep the divisive issue of nuclear weapons off the agenda. Thus, if the government does renew Trident then the UK's "model" or prefect identity may fade into the background as the UK stabilises its nuclear discourse by keeping a low nuclear profile as a NWS that has merely met its Article VI requirements. In the absence of a treaty banning nuclear weapons, Trident would likely go back to circling the seas in relative political silence until the cycle of renewal – and the argument - begins again.

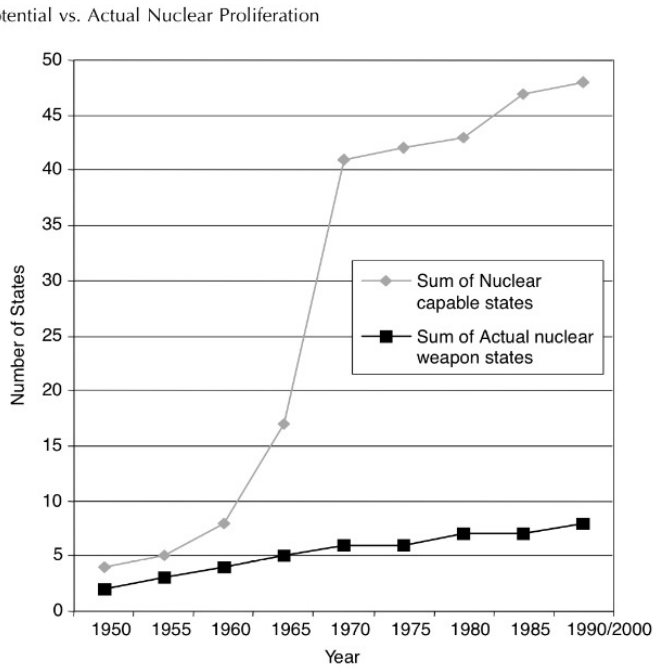
Problematizing the Maintenance of Nuclear Weapons: The Series?

The last seven chapters conducted an expository case study into UK's discursive maintenance of nuclear weapons. The objective was not to generate a hypothesis, but to show the utility of such an approach with view to problematizing other countries maintenance of nuclear regimes of truth (or perhaps even non-nuclear regimes of truth). Nonetheless, some features of the UK discourse might be expected to occur elsewhere. The international nuclear discourses analysed in Chapter 4 can be considered a shared discursive resource that constrains and enables all nuclear armed-states to some degree. Indeed, all current nuclear weapon armed states represent their nuclear weapons as a deterrent of some sort. Further, none of them— bar the US 60 years ago—have used their nuclear weapons. Therefore, it is reasonable to expect that each state will produce a unique nuclear discourse that solidifies the transcendental effects of their nuclear deterrent: their own discursively maintained nuclear peace correlation that warrants investigation (and disruption). Moreover, since the 1990s most nuclear weapons states have openly subscribed to the disarmament agenda, therefore they will also likely need to construct their own legitimising logics to justify their maintenance. These are just tentative suggested routes for investigations; what is certain is that each country will have a distinct nuclear regime of truth with distinct representations that stabilise their nuclear discourse and enable maintenance. I hold that investigating each country's regime of truth in a manner similar to this thesis, would offer a useful insights into each country's relationship to its nuclear weapons, and this can only help the international disarmament agenda unsettle and perhaps cajole nuclear armed states into moving to non-nuclear security.

Appendices

Appendix 1

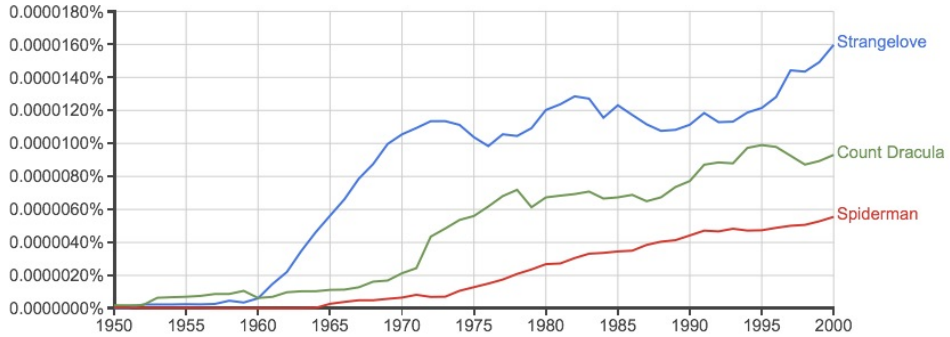
Potential vs. Actual Nuclear Proliferation



Source: Hymans, 2006a, p. 457, fig.1

Appendix 2

Frequency of the words "Strangelove", "Count Dracula" and, "Spiderman" occurring in Google's digitalized library of books published in English in the United States



Source: I made this graph using the *Google N-Gram Viewer*. This graph, together information regarding the method can be found here: https://books.google.com/ngrams/graph?content=Strangelove%2CSpiderman%2CCount+Dracula&year_start=1950&year_end=2000&corpus=15&smoothing=3&share=&direct_url=t1%3B%2CStrangelove%3B%2Cc0%3B.t1%3B%2CSpiderman%3B%2Cc0%3B.t1%3B%2CCount%20Dracula%3B%2Cc0

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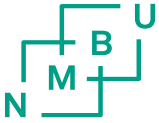
Hansard. (2007, 14 March) *House of Commons Debate*: volume 458 column 349
Hansard. (2007, 14 March) *House of Commons Debate*: volume 458 column 364
Hansard. (2007, 14 March) *House of Commons Debate*: volume 458 column 369
Hansard. (2007, 14 March) *House of Commons Debate*: volume 468 column 373
Hansard. (2007, 14 March) *House of Commons Debate*: volume 458 column 378-379
Hansard. (2007, 14 March) *House of Commons Debate*: volume 458 column 390
Hansard. (2007, 14 March) *House of Commons Debate*: volume 458 column 395



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