

# The British Way in Cold Warfare

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*Intelligence, Diplomacy  
and the Bomb*  
1945–1975

Edited by MATTHEW GRANT

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## *Foreword*

Matthew Grant has brought together a fine fistful of younger British Cold War scholars who represent the first generation truly capable of reconstructing the most intimate and chilling aspects of state activity during the great, 40-year East-West confrontation. Because only since the mid-1990s, when they were cutting their intellectual teeth, have scholars been able to access the well in advance of 100,000 files that had been retained beyond the 30 year norm because of their inherent sensitivity.

Those files and this book represent a remarkable example of catch-up history which fills the huge gap in our knowledge of the post-1945 British state.

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## *Abbreviations*

3DQP	Three-Dimensional Quartz Phenolic
ABM	Anti-Ballistic Missile
AJDC	American Joint Distribution Agency
AMM	Anti-Missile Missile
ANF	Atlantic Nuclear Force
AWRE	Atomic Weapons Research Establishment
BAOR	British Army of the Rhine
BMD	Ballistic Missile Defence
BMEWS	Ballistic Missile Early Warning System
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CDI	Chief of Defence Intelligence
CDS	Chief of the Defence Staff
CENTO	Central Treaty Organization
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CID	Criminal Investigation Department
CIG	Current Intelligence Group
CND	Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament
CNI	Critical National Infrastructure
COS	Chiefs of Staff
CSCE	Conference on Cooperation and Security in Europe
DEI	Directorate of Economic Intelligence
DEW	Distance Early Warning
DIS	Defence Intelligence Staff
DP	Displaced Person
DOPC	Defence and Overseas Policy Committee
DPP	Director of Public Prosecutions
DSO	Defence Security Officer
EC	European Community
EDC	European Defence Community
EEC	European Economic Community
EFTA	European Free Trade Association
EID	Economic Intelligence Department

EMP	Electromagnetic Pulse
ENDC	Eighteen Nation Disarmament Conference
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
FCO	Foreign and Commonwealth Office
FO	Foreign Office
FOI	Freedom of Information Act
FRG	Federal Republic of Germany
GC&CS	Government Code & Cypher School
GCHQ	Government Communication Headquarters
GDR	German Democratic Republic
GLCM	Ground Launched Cruise Missile
GSP	Global Strategy Paper
GNP	Gross National Product
HDR	Home Defence Review
HMG	Her Majesty's Government
HOW	Home Office Warrant
HUMINT	Human Intelligence
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
ICBM	Intercontinental Ballistic Missile
IMC	Integrated Military Command
IRBM	Intermediate Range Ballistic Missile
JARIC	Joint Air Reconnaissance Intelligence Centre
JIB	Joint Intelligence Bureau
JIC	Joint Intelligence Committee
JIGSAW	Joint Inter-Services Group for the Study of All-Out Warfare
JSTPS	Joint Strategic Target Planning Staff
JTAC	Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre
MDA	Mutual Defence Agreement
MEW	Ministry of Economic Warfare
MI5	Security Service
MIDAS	Missile Defence Alarm System
MIRV	Multiple Independently Targetable Re-entry Vehicles
MLF	Multilateral Force
MOD	Ministry of Defence
MRBM	Medium Range Ballistic Missile
MTSC	JIC Sub-committee on Missile Threat Coordination
MTWP	JIC Sub-committee on Missile Threat Coordination Working Party
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NPG	Nuclear Planning Group
NPT	Non-Proliferation Treaty
NRDC	Natural Resources Defense Council
NUCOPS	Nuclear Operations Branch, Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe
PN	Ministerial Committee on Nuclear Policy

PSA	Polaris Sales Agreement
PTBT	Partial Test Ban Treaty
QRA	Quick Reaction Alert
RAE	Royal Aircraft Establishment
RAF	Royal Air Force
RSG	Regional Seat of Government
RSS	Radio Security Service
SAC	Strategic Air Command
SACEUR	Supreme Allied Commander, Europe
SACLANT	Supreme Allied Commander Atlantic
SALT	Strategic Arms Limitation Talks
SAMS	Surface-to-Air Missiles
SDI	Strategic Defence Initiative
SEATO	South-East Asia Treaty Organization
SHAPE	Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe
SIGINT	Signals Intelligence
SIME	Security Intelligence Middle East
SIOP	Single Integrated Operations Plan
SIS	Secret Intelligence Service
SLBM	Submarine Launched Ballistic Missile
SPD	Social Democratic Party of Germany (Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands)
SRI	Stanford Research Institute
UKAEA	United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority
UNAEC	United Nations Atomic Energy Commission
UNRRA	United Nations Relief and Reconstruction Agency
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction

## *Introduction: The Cold War and British National Interest*

*Matthew Grant*

The most often quoted comment on Britain's post-1945 global position is probably Dean Acheson's December 1962 statement that 'Britain has lost an Empire, and has not yet found a role'.<sup>1</sup> Acheson, then President Kennedy's Special Advisor on NATO Affairs, was talking in terms of a nation on the cusp of leaving behind a 'weak' independent policy based on a Commonwealth 'with no political structure, or unity, or strength' and taking a 'step forward of great importance' and committing themselves to the EEC.<sup>2</sup> Acheson was talking as someone keen for Britain to play a full part in Europe and for the nation's leaders to accept that there was no Big Three, nor even a Big Two-and-a-Half. As Truman's former Secretary of State put it, 'Great Britain, attempting to work alone and to be a broker between the United States and Russia, has seemed to conduct a policy as weak as its military power'.<sup>3</sup> Acheson was hardly an impartial observer, but his desire to see Britain fall back into NATO's ranks struck a chord with both contemporaries and subsequent historians alike. His remarks have become a convenient shorthand for British decline, the concept that has pretty much dominated the writing of post-1945 British overseas history ever since.<sup>4</sup> 'Decline', when comparing the world Ernest Bevin surveyed from his Foreign Office desk in 1945 to that viewed by David Owen in 1977, was palpable. Britain's transition from Empire to Europe has traditionally been seen as a major landmark in the decline story – and in symbolic terms it was – but we must reject Acheson's statement that Britain had not yet found a role.

Britain had a role, at least a role for itself, throughout the post-1945/Cold War period. That role was essentially simple: to pursue national interests wherever they might be found. 'National interest' in this sense was elastic: global political, economic and strategic objectives were obviously in 'the national interest', but it is perhaps more useful to think of it as the desire to extend or maintain British influence and prestige around the globe. All this might seem obvious, and naturally the other nations of the world sought to do the same. For Britain, the position was complicated by the fact that it had an enormous array of commitments and 'interests' throughout the globe – massively increased by the war – and decreasing means of meeting them. In short, Britain had the military and political requirements of a major world power, but lacked the wherewithal to pay for them.

Confronted with the relatively simple problem of too many interests and not

enough cash, one might be forgiven for considering that there was an obvious answer: cut back to what could be afforded. It's certainly an answer that some have suggested before, with economic historians citing the high levels of expenditure on Britain's global role as contributing enormously to national economic decline.<sup>5</sup> It certainly cost a great deal of cash, starved the economy of manpower and tended to skew Britain's industrial and scientific resources in favour of military ends.<sup>6</sup> Whether Britain's global ambitions 'harmed' the economy is debatable,<sup>7</sup> but the military historian Corelli Barnett has suggested that this 'over-stretch' alongside spending on the welfare state was economically disastrous. Without these drains on the exchequer, Britain's economic future could have been secured with ease.<sup>8</sup>

The problem with such suggestions is that both welfare provision and the global role were equally part of the *raison d'être* of the post-1945 British state. Maintaining British power, just as much as ending employment, was a central tenet of the postwar political consensus: just as the Conservatives could not be seen as the anti-welfare party, Labour would not be seen as shirking their 'duty'.<sup>9</sup> The pursuit of power and prestige was not a blind activity on the part of British politicians in the 40 or so years after 1945. The nation could not afford its active global role and everyone connected to the government knew it. Even the most cursory glance at any volume of Cabinet papers from the 30 years after 1945 would reveal that the difficulty in paying for British overseas 'obligations' was a primary and pressing concern. But despite the hand-wringing, when the politicians sat down in cold blood to re-evaluate British interests in the light of economic circumstances, they could not bring themselves to trim back. When, in 1956, Anthony Eden as Prime Minister ordered a wide-ranging policy review to allow the British to 'cut their coat according to their cloth' – a favourite analogy of the British state – little actually happened in terms of cutting back on obligations.<sup>10</sup> It invariably took seismic shocks to force major rethinks. Britain's withdrawal of support from Greece and Turkey in 1947 was a result of intense financial pressure,<sup>11</sup> and the Wilson government's decision to axe Britain's presence 'East of Suez' was taken as a part of a wider, painful searching for cuts.<sup>12</sup> Even the reviews of Britain's overseas representation, which saw Britain cut back on diplomatic costs, was part of an attempt to trim expenditure in desperate circumstances.<sup>13</sup>

What were these 'obligations', 'commitments' or 'interests'? The former two words imply a degree of international agreement, such as a treaty, requiring Britain to maintain a certain position or alliance. 'Interests' were invariably less formal, and were often shadowy or ad hoc, with British leaders preferring to discuss British overseas activities in the language of requirements rather than narrow interests. Of course, 'obligations' and 'commitments' arose out of interests as Britain attempted to further its interests by signing agreements implying mutual obligations. Thus the tangle of agreement which typifies British involvement in Palestine, Iraq and Persia in the first decade of the Cold War, were certainly commitments, but ones that arose out of a pursuit of national interests that included securing oil resources and preventing Soviet infiltration.<sup>14</sup> Conversely, Britain's 'obligations' in Egypt can be said to have expired when the last British troops left the Canal Zone as required by the 1954 agreement signed by Eden as Foreign Secretary.<sup>15</sup> Britain's ill-fated attempt to seize the Canal, in

collusion with France and Israel, was launched in defence of 'vital' national interests, and the collusion itself was aimed at justifying Anglo-French involvement by invoking the last vestiges of 'obligations' they had in the area: to protect the canal in a time of war.<sup>16</sup>

The Suez misadventure is also one of the prime examples of prestige trumping rational policy, indeed trumping national interest, as an overriding Cold War concern was the avoidance of international tension, not the creation of it. Pride and the fear of humiliation – both national and personal – undoubtedly drove Eden on in his attempt to destroy his Egyptian nemesis, President Nasser.<sup>17</sup> But prestige is a tricky, amorphous concept. Perhaps it can best be viewed as a mentality, a driving desire to obtain a sense of worth for nation or self. It can certainly be attributed to the wider story of Britain's declining power. The increasing sense of powerlessness – of global prominence slipping away – led to British politicians placing prestige, the visible marks of influence, high on the list of national priorities. Maintaining British power, pursuing prestige was a way of battling against the fear of decline that was a daily experience for British politicians. As Jim Tomlinson has noted in his work on ideas of relative economic decline, how decline was debated and *experienced* is just as relevant to the story of post-1945 Britain as 'objective' historical accounts of the extent of decline.<sup>18</sup> It is all well and good arguing in hindsight that Britain's global decline was clear in 1945, but few contemporaries would have agreed. Conversely, by the late 1950s a sense of national decline was palpable – and by the 1970s was widely being discussed in terms of a 'national disease' – but was rarely considered irreversible.<sup>19</sup>

This desire led in part to Britain's attempt to play a mediating role in the Cold War, the role of which Acheson was so scathing. Of course, both Churchill and Macmillan, in their Prime Ministerial quests for summit or personal diplomacy, genuinely felt they could achieve breakthroughs with the Russians and wished to do so independently of American policy concerns, of which British prime ministers were often critical.<sup>20</sup> But the pursuit of summit diplomacy was also indelibly tied to the projection of British influence for the consumption of a variety of audiences: international, domestic and the self. The latter cannot be dismissed. Eden's case is obvious, but his successor's is worth investigating.

Macmillan presided over a diplomatic system that was coalescing into the super-power relationship. Gone were the Four Power conferences of the post-war years, and the multilateral agreements over Indo-China and Austria, which proved such highlights of Eden's final stint in the Foreign Office, likewise were of lessening importance.<sup>21</sup> A major setback to Macmillan's hopes for Britain's global role was the moment when President Kennedy met his Soviet opposite Khrushchev in Vienna in the summer of 1961.<sup>22</sup> Yet, Macmillan's own visits to America, and especially Moscow, were presented by the Prime Minister, and received in the press, as examples of Britain's diplomatic clout.<sup>23</sup> President Eisenhower's London visit in the autumn of 1959 was utilized as a shameless electioneering tool.<sup>24</sup> In similar ways, Margaret Thatcher famously used the Falklands conflict to prop up a sense of British power,<sup>25</sup> and it has been suggested that one reason for Wilson's refusal to countenance scrapping Britain's nuclear weapons was his unwillingness to 'risk history judging him to be the one who

left the United Kingdom without its ultimate weapon', should the nation be threatened by a continuing nuclear power.<sup>26</sup>

Of course, combined with the rather unquantifiable nature of prestige considerations went a good deal of personal hubris on the part of British leaders that *they* were the ones who could make the breakthroughs in constrained diplomatic times: something that typified premiers from Churchill to Thatcher. All wished to stride on the world stage, and their varied motives – a genuine belief that they could do business with varying parties in a way others could not, national prestige and even personal glory – are inseparable.<sup>27</sup> One aspect of this personal diplomacy was aimed at alleviating Cold War tension; the other was aimed at persuading allies to bend themselves to British ways of thinking. This leads onto the other side of the prestige coin: the direction of policy to deliver influence and 'real' prestige in international affairs – often with America. Historians working on the aftermath of the Suez crisis and on British nuclear policy increasingly hold it as axiomatic that British policy was increasingly focused on delivering influence within the corridors of Washington, on the grounds that only by holding such influence would British objectives be met. The classic example is the need to maintain influence in order to secure and then maintain the cooperation necessary to continue Britain's 'independent' nuclear deterrent.<sup>28</sup> Britain, being unable to achieve this alone, required support from the United States. Of course, the essential story of the Cold War rests on America providing such support for Western Europe as well as Britain in terms of military might on the continent and the nuclear umbrella. However, it increasingly became a priority to be able to influence the Americans to do what London wanted, but what Washington might initially be reluctant to do. Prestige was both an end in itself and a mechanism for achieving other objectives.

Thus we can see that prestige is not a separate factor, but inseparable from all other considerations of national interest that were current in the Cold War period. It was not fixed, but adaptable. What once would have been considered humiliating could be recalibrated as acceptable relatively quickly. British policy towards its African colonies is a clear example, crushing the Kenyan Mau Mau uprising in the early 1950s,<sup>29</sup> but ceding power to 'moderate' elements throughout the continent later.<sup>30</sup> As long as 'key interests' could be met, usually in terms of defence and economic agreements, prestige was not seriously damaged. Indeed, the language of trusteeship and comparing British policy favourably with that of other European powers were turned to British advantage.

To return to Acheson's terminology, Britain did indeed have a role; and it is in terms of the pursuit of various national interests – and pursuing them on a restricted budget – that Britain's Cold War history must be understood. Power was to be upheld and projected, and influence and prestige maintained and extended, but in affordable ways. Above all, Britain sought 'value'. If leaders could not face cutting back on obligations, or damaging prestige, then ways must be sought for maintaining them. As mentioned above, British overseas policy is incomprehensible if one does not take into account the prevailing economic circumstances of the British state.<sup>31</sup> This then, is how Britain confronted the Cold War: as a paradigm in which its interests

were threatened by ideologically opposed forces on a global scale and ambivalently aided by its main ally. Of course, the Cold War was not Britain's only concern in this area; the twin concerns of Empire and Europe were major issues that have tended to dominate the historiography of British overseas policy.<sup>32</sup> But the Cold War was *the* organizing factor of these years and Britain's geo-political choices were shaped by the wider international conflict; Malaya and European integration make little sense without their Cold War backdrop.<sup>33</sup> As the essays in this volume will show, activities traditionally considered to be part of the Cold War were very often utilized to advance British interests in other arenas. The importance of the Cold War cannot be overstated: power was sought to protect national interests against superpower infiltration; prestige was measured primarily by Britain's relations with the United States and the Soviet Union; indeed, British decline can perhaps be encapsulated by the process which the Big Three of 1945 became the British-less 'Superpowers' in short order. Much effort was expended in maintaining, achieving and *displaying* Britain's global reach and diplomatic clout.

Thus the Cold War was 'fought' in a manner to shore up a relative global position that seemed endangered, to maintain British security, and to do so with the minimum effort. Three quick examples can be used to illustrate this. First, Britain was committed to maintaining the security of Western Europe. This was enshrined in a number of agreements made with continental neighbours in the first years after 1945, Britain's participation in NATO and its significant military presence in the form of the British Army of the Rhine (BAOR).<sup>34</sup> This amounted to an enormous burden, and the NATO agreement was pursued so vigorously because it would ensure the American military and nuclear presence in Europe, thereby reaffirming European security at a time when The British could not afford any further strengthening of it themselves. When the United States began pressing for West German rearmament as a means for ensuring that the Europeans were paying for their own defence in the early 1950s, Britain – though deeply ambivalent about the prospect of a strengthened Germany – also saw it as an opportunity to reduce costs without lessening security.<sup>35</sup> Thus a key element of British foreign policy at this time was aimed at balancing diplomatic interests, maintaining security and reducing a defence burden that was becoming critical. Secondly, in 1957 the government published a wide-ranging defence review that was designed to cut the Gordian knot and maintain security while allowing significant savings to be made.<sup>36</sup> The Sandys White Paper announced Britain's commitment to thermonuclear deterrence, allowing the BAOR and Fighter Command to be reduced and national service scrapped without harming British interests. In future it would be the H-Bomb, not conscript soldiers in Germany that would provide the final guarantee of British national interests.<sup>37</sup> Finally, we have the retreat from East of Suez. In a financial crisis, this commitment was cut, but at the same time the Polaris submarine system, which carried the nuclear deterrent, was retained and the prospect of 'improving' it was left open. The East of Suez decision looked like, and indeed was, a significant signpost of Britain's decolonization, but it took place in a context that ensured Britain's newly defined primary national interests were unaffected.<sup>38</sup>

Britain's pursuit of its various national objectives naturally received a good deal of



buffering and many setbacks, and 'interests' were continually recast and scaled back. Economic pressures, technological advances and diplomatic and political uncertainties all required basic Cold War objectives to be rethought. However, the essential strategy remained the same: to pursue British interests as effectively and cheaply as possible. This was the 'British way' in Cold Warfare. Three spheres in which this activity took place are the focus of this book: nuclear weapons, diplomacy (broadly defined) and intelligence. The first and third areas of historical enquiry have been explored in great depth only recently, having been the beneficiaries of a new era of archival openness that was being felt since before the Freedom of Information Act of 2000 came into force in 2005.<sup>39</sup> The second area has seen a change in emphasis as its practitioners fold in new findings from the other spheres of Britain's Cold War history.

Nuclear weapons were central to Britain's Cold War policy.<sup>40</sup> On the very basic level they served as the ultimate strategic guarantee of British national interests: the premise being that Britain would be able to independently inflict enough damage on the Soviet Union, or indeed any enemy, to deter it from aggressive acts directed at Britain. Therefore, by possessing such weapons, Britain was capable of defending itself and its interests in the world even if NATO dissolved and the United States retreated in isolationism. On another level, nuclear weapons were the ultimate symbol of prestige. Britain followed only America and the Soviets in possessing first the atomic and then the thermonuclear weapon. Holding the ultimate weapon in reserve was seen as guaranteeing Britain's place at the 'top table' as Churchill put it.<sup>41</sup> As part of a nuclear club, Britain's permanent place on the UN Security Council was assured, and it gave the nation leverage in diplomatic discussions. In short, the bomb – with its power, international cache, not to mention the scientific and industrial prowess needed to produce it – was *the* signifier of a great power. As mentioned above, possession of the thermonuclear bomb also allowed Britain to cut back on expensive conventional measures without harming security interests.

Of course, the benefits of the bomb were not so straightforward. Britain's nuclear history is ambiguous: a truly independent nuclear weapon involves both the actual warhead and the means of delivery. Having H-bombs is worthless unless they can be exploded over the enemy. It was in terms of delivery that Britain struggled. The centrepiece of Britain's 1950s military effort was the V-Bombers, a trio of supersonic bombers designed to ferry the weapon to Russia. But by 1960 it was becoming clear that Soviet air defences would intercept such jets and that an alternative means of delivery would be needed. After a complicated series of initiatives and discussions spanning 1960–62, it was decided to abandon a purely British solution to the problem, and instead purchase America's Polaris system.<sup>42</sup> This, in turn, was replaced by the Trident system.<sup>43</sup> Thus, there is a problem at the heart of Britain's deterrent: the prime symbol of national prestige also illustrated the nation's inability to match the military sophistication of the superpowers. The independent deterrent was clearly dependent on American technology.

This ambiguity was politically important, especially in the 1964 General Election when Harold Wilson criticized Conservative policy.<sup>44</sup> But once Labour was in power,

as for all British governments of either political party, what mattered more was that the delivery system existed – and that British nuclear weapons were physically there.<sup>45</sup> What they were concerned with was that they stayed there; that they continued to be a credible threat; and that as few other powers had them as possible. Traditionally, British nuclear history has concentrated on the effort of creating the bombs, and the political decision-making process that led to this. More recent work has refocused nuclear history, with the diplomatic aspects of the story coming to fore, especially the turbulent nuclear relationship with the United States, and in the last couple of years, the way nuclear issues impinged on matters of European integration.<sup>46</sup> The first three chapters in this book primarily cover the nuclear issue, although it is a major issue throughout the volume. First, Kristen Stoddart surveys the history of British nuclear strategy in the Cold War – emphasizing the difficulties Britain had in matching technological development with global ambition. The next two chapters illustrate that Britain's nuclear policies were not solely focused on the ability to destroy cities. Stephen Twigge writes about the efforts to secure agreement on disarmament and non-proliferation issues, and the editor writes on how civil defence was conceptualized by government as part of the national nuclear strategy. Overall, these chapters demonstrate the nuances of British nuclear policy, showing that nuclear matters permeated all aspects of the British state's Cold War policy.

The volume's next theme is diplomacy, a central part of Britain's Cold War strategy. The only way Britain's interests could be met was to ensure someone else was doing so. In a sense, this is what Britain was able to do in the Eastern Mediterranean in 1947: the Truman Doctrine served British interests in the region just as much as American, but with Washington footing the Bill.<sup>47</sup> Britain's diplomatic efforts of the early Cold War period are characterized by a seemingly endless series of treaties or agreements designed to ensure that strategic and economic interests were secured: whether it be the Dunkirk Treaty, the Brussels Treaty, the signing of the NATO pact, not to mention SEATO or CENTO (formed by the Baghdad Pact), the Geneva talks of 1955, or the various inconclusive Four Power Talks.<sup>48</sup> Many of these were only partially successful, but all were designed to follow a national strategy. Particular successes were the NATO agreement and the Polaris Sales Agreement. Notable failures included the inability to secure any real agreement with the Soviet Union over Germany, the whole Egyptian debacle and the inability to secure entry to the EEC before the 1970s.

Diplomacy is an area of enquiry that traditionally forms the very stuff of Cold War history. Works on the Anglo-American relationship, or on Britain's diplomatic role in the main crises of the Cold War have extended our understanding of Britain's international role. New research is adding to this all the time, and a great deal is now known about British attitudes to the newly divided Germany,<sup>49</sup> or the nation's role in the Cuban Missile Crisis.<sup>50</sup> Overall, more recent works of diplomatic history have served to highlight the inter-relationships between various aspects of foreign policy, especially the relations between the Cold War and decolonization, and the Cold War and European Integration. The chapters in this volume illustrate this new focus. R. Gerald Hughes analyses the complexities of Anglo-German relations in a manner that illustrates the difficulties Britain had in pursuing policies for its own ends. Helen

Parr and Melissa Pine both illustrate the difficulties Britain had in negotiating as part of a nuclear and diplomatic triangle, which included both America and France. Parr illustrates that nuclear issues cannot be separated from the story of European integration, and that the issue of nuclear cooperation was of central importance both to the Heath government's achievement in taking Britain into Europe, and also to President de Gaulle's refusal to countenance it while he was in office in the 1960s. Pine demonstrates that the United States was not a passive operator in this, that they pursued their own active policy of nuclear cooperation with the French.

The final theme is intelligence. A central part of the 'British way' in Cold Warfare was to analyse the enemy's intentions and capabilities in order to better understand their policies, and to inform Britain's own.<sup>51</sup> Just like the nuclear deterrent, intelligence power was characterized by an unequal Anglo-American partnership;<sup>52</sup> but like nuclear matters, intelligence cooperation was primarily used for furthering British aims, and the intelligence sharing partnership was pursued on those grounds. Even more than other aspects of Cold War history, current research on intelligence is a product of the new archival regimes in Britain. Before the mid-1990s, virtually nothing could be written on intelligence history. Since then, intelligence history has blossomed.<sup>53</sup> From a focus on spies and spying, the genre now demonstrates how vital intelligence gathering and analysis was for British policies in the Cold War. As these chapters show, Britain's intelligence operations had a vital role in decolonization and in nuclear policy-making. Michael Goodman's short chapter surveys the British intelligence structures from the Cold War until today, highlighting continuity and evaluating its significance. Calder Walton demonstrates the central importance of intelligence operations for British security concerns with his case study on Palestine in the 1940s. Catherine Haddon's piece examines how intelligence assessments shaped the way nuclear policy was conducted in the fraught discussions over Polaris improvement at the end of the 1960s. Finally, Peter Davies focuses on the neglected subject of economic intelligence, looking at how estimates of Soviet national wealth were compiled and the uses to which those figures were put.

Any edited collection containing original research covering a broad time-frame cannot hope to have the breadth of coverage needed to tell the whole story of Britain's Cold War. There are obvious areas of neglect: the home front story badly needs more research, and the exciting new work being completed on cultural diplomacy is absent here. But the contributions and the three themes into which they have been divided do have a degree of coherence, focusing as they do on ways of meeting certain British objectives. The themes themselves interweave, with the individual chapters often straddling different areas. Overall, the individual essays demonstrate that – on one level – Britain's Cold War role was relatively straightforward: establish security, pursue interests, avoid humiliation and stave off bankruptcy. But they also show the complexities involved in pursuing British national interests in a difficult environment, and how, over time, Britain sought new partnerships and ways of influencing the world. They also illustrate that far from searching for a role, Britain was pursuing its national interests throughout the cold war, pragmatically seeking to extend its influence, and maintain its prestige.

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