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THE BERTRAND RUSSELL PEACE FOUNDATION

# PEACE DOSSIER

2001

Number 1

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## FULL SPECTRUM DOMINANCE

*'Full Spectrum Dominance' is the key term in Joint Vision 2020, the blueprint the United States Department of Defence will follow in the future, from which these extracts are taken.*

*Full Spectrum Absurdity*

**Source of Friction**

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**SON OF STAR WARS**

*This letter was published in The Times in March 2001 to coincide with the visit to Washington of British Defence Minister Geoff Hoon.*

*Peace Dossier*

*Hansard*

*Hansard*

*This letter was signed by*

## **NUCLEAR WEAPONS, UNCERTAINTY AND THE LAW**

*There is good reason to believe that any threat or use of a 100 kiloton UK Trident warhead would be open to serious legal doubts. The Government responds by stating that 'the United Kingdom's minimum nuclear deterrent is entirely consistent with international law'. However, we need more information before we can assess the validity of this claim. Answers to several questions are required, as the World Court Project ([www.gn.apc.org/wcp](http://www.gn.apc.org/wcp)) spells out*

### **The Government case**

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*Peace Dossier*

**2) Would the Ministry of Defence endorse the example provided by Duncan  
Menzies QC of how Trident might be used lawfully?**

**Doubts about Certainty**

*inevitably*      *any*

*inherently*

**Risk assessment**

*Full Spectrum Absurdity*

- 3) Without a serious and publicly available probability analysis of the potential results of a Trident strike, how can the Government assure us that no threat or use of Trident could risk violating the law?**
- 4) Is the Government confident that Trident could be used with sufficient or predictable accuracy against the chosen target?**

**Balancing the Consequences**

- 5) **What are the general criteria for determining the balance between military necessity and suffering to civilians arising from the use of Trident?**
- 6) **What are the general theoretical sources of these criteria?**
- 7) **Is the Government confident that, even if these criteria were well understood by lawyers and decision makers well beforehand, they could be relied upon to provide secure practical, moral and legal guidance during a nuclear emergency?**

**Effects on people**

*Full Spectrum Absurdity*

- 8) Has any assessment been carried out by the United Kingdom Government of the effects of a 100 kiloton Trident warhead detonation on a civilian population living near a nuclear target? If so, is there any good reason why the results should not be made public?**

**Nuclear secrecy**

- 9) Why does the Government decline to disclose the legal criteria governing the possible use of Trident?**
- 10) If these criteria are treated as secret, how can the courts operate effectively in cases involving citizen disarmament of Trident?**
- 11) How can ordinary citizens, who honestly doubt the legality of the threat or use of Trident, hope to act with probity without access to the Government's legal criteria?**

**Reprisals**

- 12) Can the Government confirm that under no circumstances would Trident ever be even threatened, let alone used, against a civilian population as such?**

**Legal scrutiny of trident needed**

*as such*

**13) Will the Government recognise that the legality of the threat or use of Trident is open to serious doubt and therefore deserves the fullest public scrutiny?**

**HIROSHIMA CONFERENCE**

*Full Spectrum Absurdity*

**STOP BOMBING VIEQUES!**

*The Committee for the Rescue and Development of Vieques can be contacted at P.O. Box 1424 Vieques, Puerto Rico 00765, Tel. (787) 741-0716 e-mail:bieke@coqui.net*

**ASLEF**

*General Secretary: M.D. Bie Assistant General Secretary: M.F. Blackburn*

ASSOCIATED SOCIETY OF  
A.S.L.E.F.

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