

Opponents of Trident Successor programme claim it isn't independent.

From January 2001 to March 2005 Frank Miller was a special assistant to President George W. Bush and senior director for defence policy and arms control on the National Security Council staff. He was chair of NATO's nuclear policy committee and of NATO's counterproliferation policy committee.

He says : "I exercised direct policy oversight of the US strategic nuclear deterrent from 1981 to 2001. From early 1982 onwards that brief included responsibility for the US/UK nuclear relationship. I was intimately familiar during those years with US nuclear weapons plans, policies, procedures and weapons systems (and with most British ones as well.

"At no time was there any evidence (or even a suggestion) that a US 'veto' existed over a British Prime Minister's ability to execute independently the UK's Polaris or Trident force. Indeed, had such a capability existed, I would have become aware of it as part of the intrusive nature of my oversight responsibilities.

"No such mechanism exists and the UK's independent nuclear deterrent is exactly that : Independent"

Quoted by Peter Hennessey and James Jinks in their book *The Silent Deep : The Royal Navy Submarine Service since 1945*, and reproduced with their and Mr Miller's permissions.

The U K Defence Forum will publish a review of the book in due course.