

decision by HMG. However, the FCO remain opposed to sea-disposal because of the damage to UK interests which they fear could arise from US opposition (see para 11 below), and because they are concerned that disposing of DREADNOUGHT in 1989 could foreclose the option of sea-disposal of large decommissioned items in the future. At official level, there is also growing unease about sea-disposal in the MAFF because of opposition from the LDC countries. On the other hand, the Treasury are in favour on cost grounds, and the Scottish Office are sympathetic at official level.

INTERNATIONAL OPPOSITION

11. Sea-disposal would provoke considerable international controversy among the member states of the LDC because of the 1983 moratorium. No country has broken this, and it will continue for at least another four years. Britain would be isolated internationally were we to proceed with sea-disposal as long as the moratorium lasts.

US OPPOSITION

12. The most important problem is however the opposition to sea-disposal of the US Government. They are concerned that it would have an adverse effect upon their own Nuclear Powered Warship operations, and upon their own disposal plans. They also argue that disposing of DREADNOUGHT at sea would conflict with the 1958 US/UK Agreement (Article VI of which prohibits the transfer of such equipment beyond the UK's jurisdiction without prior US consent.) *

13. The US Government made a formal approach to the FCO in March to record their concern, but our Embassy in Washington advised against