

United Kingdom & USAFE in the UK



I cheated a little on the UK with all the airfields. Most of them are single unit airfields to keep the # of all the units down. I and even the CIA ⁱ ⁱⁱ found it improbable that airfields would be attacked by (fighter) bombers possibly because of the WP aircraft range issues and having to fight through Germany and the Netherlands/ Belgium to get to the UK... But maybe the nuclear armed Su-24 Fencers in Poland could very well do a Hi-Lo-Hi strike to the UK escorted by the Su-27's..?

Ideas:

- RAF Fairford is still empty...and open for USAF bombers.
- RAF Cottesmore has a lot of (UK/GRG/IT Tornado's for the conversion which can be used elsewhere...read their own countries.
- And a note from one of the sources: *The RAF, like the US but unlike most other air forces, appears to have held significant reserves of front-line aircraft. IISS Military Balance 89-90 lists the following aircraft in reserve: 51 Tornado GR1, 59 Tornado F2/F3, 55 Phantom, 55 Jaguar.* I did not put these in this setup, because I don't know where they were stored, but you could use this of course in your story.

Two odd units are the two Tomahawk missile Wings. I gave the bunkers Tomahawk weapons to more easily engage targets in a nuclear situation.

Checked Flag

In case of war or rising of tensions the forces in the UK will be strengthened. But also squadrons from the UK will deploy to the continent. Like the Harriers and some Jaguars. The US and British governments earmarked some RAF airfields as 'Co-located Operating Bases' (COBs) to host wartime US deployments with maintenance & spare equipment already in place. This is what I could find out about operation Checkered Flag as it is called.



Coronet Brave brought 12 F-4Ds and 270 personnel from the 170th TFS, Illinois ANG to RAF Finningley from June 12-25, 1982. (<https://www.key.aero/article/reinforcing-uk-usaf-cold-war-fighter-deployments>)

- RAF Coltishall will deploy two RAF Jaguar squadrons to Denmark, and the No 41 recce sq to Bardufos airbase in Norway.
As expected Coltishall itself is to receive up to two USAF squadrons of 18 McDonnell Douglas

RF-4C Phantom IIs. Earlier exercise deployments:

18x RF-4C Phantoms from 363rd TRW, Shaw during 1978, Coronet Heron.

RF-4C Phantoms from the 117th TRS (Alabama ANG) deployed twice in 1983 and 1986.

RF-4C Phantoms from 106 TRS (Alabama ANG) in 1983.

These earlier deployments gives you an idea what you can deploy yourself.

- RAF Wittering will deploy its RAF Harriers forward to Germany and receive 36x A-7 Corsairs of the ANG. Earlier deployments:

146TFS/112TFG Pennsylvania ANG A-7 during Coronet Teal in 1979.

157TFS/169TFG South Carolina ANG during Coronet Teal in 1979.

166TFS/121TFW Ohio ANG during Coronet Teal in 1979.

Tulsa Oklahoma ANG during Coronet Canvas in 1981.



Corsair IIs from 112th TFG, Pennsylvania ANG and 150th TFG, New Mexico ANG at RAF Wittering in July 1983 for Coronet Mail. ¹

- RAF Bentwaters would deploy it's USAFE A-10's to Germany to Alhorn, Norvenich and Leipzig. An A-10 commander also mentioned Jever and Wiesbaden as "secret" locations. Then these two empty airfields could accommodate other assets.

Earlier deployments:

12x A-10A from 355 TFS during April–May 1987 under the name Cornet DELTA.

12x A-10A from 353 TFS during June–July 1989 under the name [Cornet PYTHON](#)

12x A-10A from 356 TFS during August–September 1989 under the name [Cornet VENOM](#)

474th TFW from Nellis AFB deployed its F-16s to RAF Bentwaters for month-long, squadron-strength deployments in 1982, 1984 and 1985.ⁱⁱⁱ

- RAF Woodbridge would deploy it's USAFE A-10's to Germany to Alhorn, Norvenich and Leipzig. During the '80s the base had some A-7 visitors of the Tonapah 4450 TG F-117

¹ <https://www.key.aero/article/reinforcing-uk-usaf-cold-war-fighter-deployments>

squadron in 1984 and 1986. So it is rumored that this base would get F-117's in wartime!^{iv}



If deployed to RAF Woodbridge, the F-117's would have a considerable impact on the Warsaw Pact.

- RAF Waddington: would become a A-7 Corsair II deployment base. In 1985 no fewer than 33 ANG A-7D and 3 A-7K Corsairs were deployed during Coronet Buffalo.^v

The three ANG A-7 units assigned to Waddington were:

South Dakota ANG's 175th Tactical Fighter Squadron (TFS)/114th Tactical Fighter Group (TFG) from Sioux Falls (tail code 'SD') and two from the Iowa ANG: 174th TFS/185th TFG from Sioux City ('HA') and the 124th TFS/132nd Tactical Fighter Wing (TFW) based at Des Moines ('IA').



The 132nd TFW was the senior unit with the other two reporting to it. The only other time these units' aircraft had visited Waddington was in 1979 for Coronet Stallion, which involved 14 aircraft from the 124th TFS, three from the 175th and a sole example from the 174th.^{vi}

- RAF Finningley: two 18x strong F-4D Phantom squadrons. 183TFG/170TFS, Capitol airport, Illinois ANG deployed during Coronet Brave in 1982.^{vii} 121 TFS / District of Columbia ANG deployed during Coronet Shield 1983.
- RAF Leeming: Plus 24x F-4D Phantoms (weapon storage at RAF Odiham). Possibly extra to the three Tornado F-3 squadrons. I could not find that the Tornado F-3's would deploy somewhere.



Earlier deployments: 131TFG/110TFS, St.Louis, Missouri ANG F-4D during Coronet Cactus.^{ix}

- RAF Fairford was made available to Strategic Air Command (think B-52) but was originally planned to house 64 TAC C-130's!

Earlier deployments:^x

1980-B-52D 7th BW Carswell AFB
 1982 - B-52G 19th BW Robbins AFB
 1984 - 7x B-52G 2nd BW Barksdale AFB
 1985 – 7x B-52G 42nd BW Loring AFB
 etc.



- RAF Boscombe Down: 48x General Dynamics F-111Ds. (plus possible small amount of EF-111s)
 Earlier deployments:
 12x F-111 of the 522nd TFS from Canon AFB during Coronet Comanche in 1986
 6x EF-111 from Mountain Home.
- RAF Farnborough: 24x F-4 Phantoms (weapon storage at RAF Odiham).
- RAF Bedford: 48x F-4s.
- RAF Alconbury was to expect up to two 18 aircraft RF-4C units, to supplement its own single resident reconnaissance squadron. These arrangements, in the case of RF-4C detachments at Alconbury they were known as *Salty Bee* deployments, were tested with the arrival of 18x 363rd TRW RF-4Cs in 1982 and 1986. There were also visits by eight Mississippi ANG RF-4Cs in the autumn of 1980 for Coronet Gyro, originally scheduled for Greece. Then, in 1989, Coronet Hoop was the name of a detachment of 12 Birmingham Alabama ANG RF-4Cs.^{xi}
- RAF Abingdon: 32x C-130s.
- RAF Brize Norton: 32x C-130s.
- **Stand-by Bases (SOBs) (Son of a Bi***s?)**
 RAF Sculphthorpe (45x A-7s deployed during exercises in 1986). 162 TFS deployed for Exercise Coronet Pine 89, Ohio ANG.

- Stand-by Bases (SOBs) RAF Wethersfield (Essex), RAF Bedford (UK) RAF Benson (UK) RAF Brawdy (UK) RAF Cottesmore (UK) RAF Cranwell (UK) Leeming (UK) RAF Odiham (UK) RAF Scampton (UK)

The airfields, although single-units, have the right runway orientation.

Routing options:

Quote: Col Bob Pahl led the eight F-111Ds from the 27th TFW's 522nd TFS for Coronet Archer in 1983. He later described to author Peter Davies in the book General Dynamics F-111 Aardvark how TAC did not want the deployment to use tankers, so they had to fly from their **New Mexico base to Pease AFB in New Hampshire**, then proceed to Boscombe Down **via Goose Bay in Canada and Keflavík** in Iceland. (<https://www.key.aero/article/reinforcing-uk-usaf-cold-war-fighter-deployments>)

Another route is via **Lajes airfield** and then to Europe. This emphasizes the strategic importance of Keflavik and Lajes airfields!

To give you some idea: to deploy a squadron with 160-320 personnel and equipment, 3-8 C-141 Starlifter flights were required.

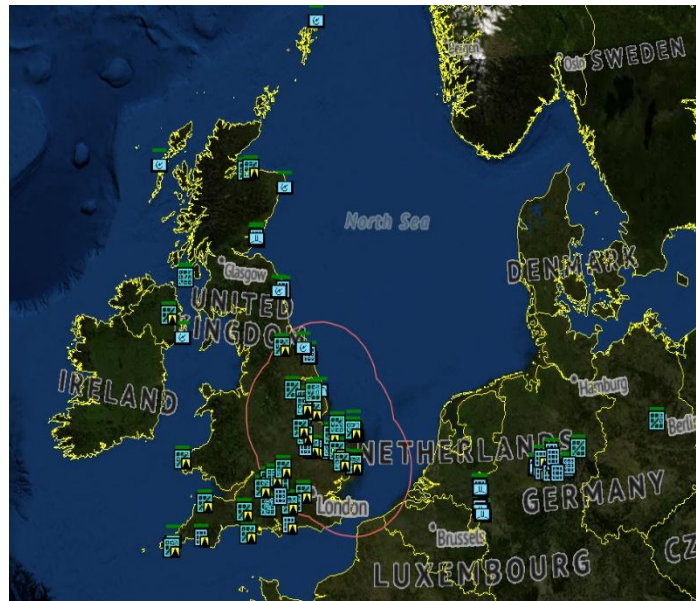
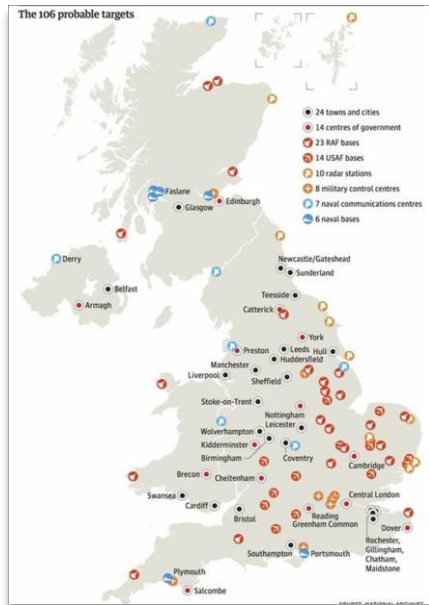
To deploy 8x A-7's from Tulsa (Oklahoma) 1x KC-10 was used who joined the aircraft in the ferry flight. A C-130 is capable of a trans-Atlantic flight, but the cargo must be reduced to 10 tons!

It is not only fighters that can go in the air. There are also two locations with nuclear armed Tomahawk missiles at your disposal...



Bunkers at RAF Greenham Common and RAF Molesworth with Tomahawk nuclear armed cruise missiles..

I incorporated the UK army air defense units in Germany already at their rough wartime locations. You can change this at your own discretion.



Main sources among others:^{xii} ^{xiii} ^{xiv} ^{xv}

ⁱ https://www.cia.gov/readingroom/docs/DOC_0000969827.pdf

ⁱⁱ https://generalstaff.org/WW3/PEDIA/Trends_WARPAC_1985-2000_CIA.pdf

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.key.aero/article/reinforcing-uk-usaf-cold-war-fighter-deployments>

^{iv}

<https://www.fightercontrol.co.uk/forum/viewtopic.php?f=18&t=247399&p=1619606&hilit=coronet#p1619606>

^v <https://www.key.aero/article/coronet-buffalo-when-36-7s-deployed-waddington>

^{vi}

https://www.reddit.com/r/FighterJets/comments/1db3uhx/coronet_buffalo_33_ang_a7d_and_3_a7k_sluf/?rdt=35968

^{vii} <https://nara.getarchive.net/topics/coronet+brave>

^{viii} https://live.staticflickr.com/4159/34362793021_65d94293a1_b.jpg

^{ix} <https://www.flickr.com/photos/reinierbergsma/34362793021/>

^x <https://www.raf-fairford.co.uk/1980s-2/>

^{xi} <https://www.key.aero/article/reinforcing-uk-usaf-cold-war-fighter-deployments>

^{xii} https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Outline_of_the_British_Royal_Air_Force_at_the_end_of_the_Cold_War

^{xiii} NATO ORDER OF BATTLE 1989_V8.6 by Mr. Johnson & Pat Callahan

^{xiv} The US and British governments earmarked some RAF airfields as 'Co-located Operating Bases' (COBs) to host wartime US deployments.

^{xv} https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/RAF_Greenham_Common