



Bomber Command: Kept in the Dark

John Stubbington

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This fascinating historical revelation goes to the very heart of British and Allied Intelligence during World War II, specifically in the context of planning, control and implementation of the combined bomber offensive against Germany. There are sound arguments based on official archives that the handling of much air intelligence was faulty and reasons to believe that some departments within Whitehall were influenced by parochial and personal attitudes that interfered with the selection of strategic targets and the planning of the bombing offensives. In some departments within Whitehall and even the Air Ministry, there was a culpable failure to understand and appreciate the operational capabilities and limitations of the RAF and USAAF bomber forces.

After the evacuation of the BEF the only means of destroying the Axis production of arms and munitions fell to the RAF and this was their prime objective for the rest of the war. The destruction of arms factories, power stations, air and ship production was the underlining objective, although when special targets, such as the break-outs of the German navy's major warships and U-Boats were deemed vital, the RAF were expected to react immediately. Much of Britain's intelligence was gathered from the German ENIGMA signals and became known as ULTRA with a security classification of MOST SECRET. Apart from the brilliant work at Bletchley Park there were other inputs from partisans throughout occupied Europe, Allied agents and various forms of reconnaissance. It was a new type of warfare that developed and improved as the war progressed but all too often the bomber squadrons were put into unnecessary peril through imprecise and unthinking demands from the highest levels of government.



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