

The leadership of Arthur Harris as commander-in-chief of RAF Bomber Command, 1942-5

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Leadership at war is a difficult term to conceptualise. Mostly because there has been a tendency in military history to evaluate commanders' display of leadership only when in direct or close contact with combat, and therefore judged by their ability to drive soldiers in harm's way to capture objectives they could never conquer on their own. This is especially appreciated when studying land warfare, where examples of high commanders being as close to battle as possible are predominant, such as Montgomery, Alexander, Slim, Bradley, Patton, and so on. Is what Professor Gray identified as "popular perception on inspirational leadership."¹ Such a narrow focus distorts the comprehension of the complex environment where high leadership operated during the Second World War, most of which took place in headquarters far away from any direct threat.

Furthermore, it is not unusual to confuse leadership with "Command", or even with that of "Generalship" (a wider definition unifying the dual concept of "Command and Control" with that of "Leadership"). An example of this was Field Marshal William Slim's remark that, "Command is the projection of personality - and like all true art, and command is an art, it is exercised by each man in his own way."² Therefore, and for the purpose of reducing confusion, this essay will define "command" as the "management and direction of troops, vehicles or equipment";³ while "Leadership is visionary; it is the projection of personality and character to inspire people to achieve the desired outcome."⁴ However, both terms are interrelated, basically because the relationship between the leader's personality and the nature of his command is one of mutual influence and interaction. Or twisting Slim's words a little: Leadership is the projection of personality through command.

It should also be mentioned that leadership is constantly weakened by prolonged exposure to high levels of stress due to overwork as well as political and military pressure to implement policy and strategy. "For that matter I wonder if the frightful mental strain of commanding a large air force in war can ever be realised except by the very few who have experienced it."⁵ These factors further complicate the assessment of leadership, especially when top commanders are meant to hide doubts and indecisiveness in front of their peers and

¹ Peter Gray, *The Leadership, Direction and Legitimacy of the RAF Bomber Offensive from Inception to 1945* (London: Bloomsbury, 2012), p. 23.

² Field Marshal Sir William Slim, "Higher Command in War", *Military Review* (May-June 2020), p. 57.

³ Richard Bowyer, *Dictionary of Military Terms* (New York: Routledge, 1999)

⁴ Gary D. Sheffield, ed., *Leadership and Command: The Anglo-American Experience since 1861* (London: Brassey's, 2002), Appendix 1, p. 297.

⁵ Arthur Harris, *Bomber Offensive* (London: Greenhill Books, 1990), p. 72.

subordinates. Or as Gray rightly points out: “There is still a culture of denial when it comes to combat stress.”⁶ All these undoubtedly have a deep effect on leadership and command’s decision-making. As such, Air Marshal (AM) Arthur Harris, RAF Bomber Command (BC hereafter) Commander-in-Chief (C-in-C), perfectly fits the criteria of a war commander that took decisions from a safe place, worked under constant stress, and displayed an unflinching faith in what Professor Buckley termed as, “Harris’ philosophy of war, [meaning] that area bombing was capable of bringing down the Third Reich”.⁷

This “philosophy” is an interesting concept because it links Harris’s leadership with his command’s nature. Or as Buckley pointed out: “Harris unwillingness to countenance shortcomings in his policy [was] indicative of his nature.”⁸ Something expressed in clear terms during a newsreel broadcast on 8 June 1942 as soon as he took control of BC:

Cologne, Lubeck, Rostock; those are only just the beginning. When the storm bursts over Germany they will look back to the days of Lubeck, and Rostock and Cologne, as a man caught in the blasts of a hurricane will look back to the gentle zephyrs of last summer. It may take a year, it may take two, but for the Nazis their writing is up on the wall. Let them look out for themselves. The cure is in their own hands.⁹

In a similar newsreel released after ‘The Thousand Bomber Raid’ against Cologne, 30-31 May 1942, Arthur Harris concludes his speech by defining his strategic mission: To oversee that BC would be able to make his idea become a reality:

We cannot send over a thousand bombers a time over Germany, every time, as yet, but the time will come when we can do so. There are lot of people who say that bombing can never win a war. Well, my answer to that is that it has never been tried again and we shall see.¹⁰

This is something Gray defined as “strategic leadership”, giving an organisation the direction to achieve an objective. Air power, if used in enough numbers and with the right concentration and tempo, promised to cause strategic paralysis at the centre of the enemy’s territory. Harris would put all his determination and courage in the face of adversity and “make it happen”.¹¹ The side effect of this is to be found in the singularity of high command leadership in the Air Force, particularly when used as a (long range) strategic weapon. Its capacity to ignore the operational ground level and the “dictatorship” of topography by just flying over meant it could directly target the enemy’s strategic level. In terms of command culture, such a difference

⁶ Peter Gray, *Air Warfare: History, Theory and Practice* (London: Bloomsbury, 2016), p. 71.

⁷ John Buckley, “Reviewed Work: Sir Arthur T. Harris: Despatch on War Operations: 23rd February to 8th May, 1945 by Sebastian Cox”, *War in History*, 3:4 (1996), p. 484.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ [Uk/ Germany: Defence: World War 2: Raf Bomb Cologne - British Pathé](#). Shootage of Harris in his office runs from 4’:46’’ to the end. Accessed on 1/05/2022

¹⁰ <https://www.britishpathe.com/video/on-the-chin/>. Camera close-up on Harris between 4’:03’’ and 4’:14’’. Quote ends at 4’:28’’. Accessed on 01/05/2022.

¹¹ Gray, *Leadership, Direction and Legitimacy*, p. 22.

between the air force in general, and strategic forces in particular, and also, the army and the navy, grew enormously, mostly because large bombers could directly attack Germany, while the rest of the armed forces took a defensive stance and did its best to recover from the 1940-1942 debacles. As Harris explained:

While a naval commander may at the most be required to conduct a major action once or twice in the whole course of the war, and an army commander is engaged in one battle say in six months, [...] the commander of a bomber force has to commit the whole of it every twenty-four hours.¹²

His determination was vital in strengthening his leadership and increasing morale and commitment; but it also damaged his command culture in the sense that he did not feel the need to “learn to speak the language of a combined military”.¹³ As a result of this he fell into operational dogmatism,¹⁴ and his working relationship with other parts of the armed forces was damaged. As Field Marshal Lord Alan Brooke, Chief of the Imperial General Staff (CIGS), wrote in his diary on 13 October 1943:

Bert Harris of Bomber Command came to see us this morning during the COS meeting. According to him the only reason why the Russian army had succeeded in advancing is due to the results of bomber offensive! According to him I am certain that we are all preventing him from winning the war. If Bomber Command was left to itself it would make much shorter work of it all!¹⁵

Harris’s leadership was not only influenced by his vision of strategic bombing. The circumstances of Bomber Command as an organisation before his arrival were also key in moulding his leadership. In October 2012 during a debate discussing the Allied bombing of Nazi Germany, Professor Richard Overy mentioned “Exercise Thunderbolt”,¹⁶ and how shocked he was when finding that Air Marshal (AM) Norman Bottomley, Deputy Chief of Air Staff (DCAS) between May 1942 to 1945, thought of BC to be, “completely unprepared and

¹² Harris, *Bomber Offensive*, p. 72.

¹³ According to Gray, Harris’ lack of awareness of air-land combined operations derives from the fact that he, unlike Portal, never attended the RAF Staff College at Andover, and therefore, “lacked the intellectual underpinnings that most future senior RAF commanders shared.” Quoted from Ross Mahoney, “Book review of Peter Gray’s Leadership, Direction and Legitimacy of the RAF Bomber Offensive from Inception to 1945”, <https://balloonstodrones.com/2022/04/21/bookreview-the-leadership-direction-and-legitimacy-of-the-raf-bomber-offensive-from-inception-to-1945/>. Accessed on 02/05/2022.

¹⁴ Christina Goulter, “Sir Arthur Harris: Different Perspectives”, in Gary Sheffield and Geoffrey Till, eds., *The Challenges of High Command: The British Experience* (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), p. 127.

¹⁵ Field Marshal Lord Alanbrooke, *War Diaries 1939-1945* (London: Phoenix Paperback, 2002), 460

¹⁶ Held at the School of Air Support at Old Sarum, Wilshire, in 1947 under the auspices of Air Marshal Sir Arthur Tedder, CAS, it consisted of a four-days research, conferences and “uninhibited discussion” about the experience and accumulated knowledge of strategic bombing between January 1943 and the end of the Second World War in Europe. See Vincent Orange, *Tedder: Quietly in Command* (Abingdon, Oxon: Frank Cass Publishers, 2004), pp. 325-326.

did not know what they were doing during the first two or three years of the campaign.”¹⁷ That such a high ranking RAF officer - especially someone who happen to succeed Harris in every post he was departing from-¹⁸ heavily involved in the process of defining air directives, expressed in 1947 such a harsh assessment of BC’s work between 1940 and 1942 poses an interesting hint on how leadership is affected when operating within an organisation characterised at the time by its military ineffectiveness. Air Marshal Arthur Tedder was clearly pointing to this problem when at the end of the aforementioned exercise he concluded that, “towards the end of a log war, if you are winning, everything becomes relatively easy, [...] but attention had to be focused on preparation and on the early days of war - which would be hard, for a society not preparing an offensive.”¹⁹

Harris took command of the strategic bomber fleet precisely in the year Bottomley believed BC started to know its trade. Moreover February 1942 not only marks the beginning of his command, but also the end of the Directive for Policy of [Aircraft] Conservation (13 November 1941) and the resume of the bombing offensive against “the morale of the enemy civil population and in particular, of the industrial workers”, which together “.²⁰ For Harris’ leadership this meant a reinforced and fully aligned relationship between the political and the strategic levels. And secondly, his leadership was positively conditioned by the (painful and costly) accumulation of bombing experience during the previous three years. He therefore profited from an organisation that had evolved from untested air doctrines in the late 1930s into a clear set of operational requirements needed for effective bombing. It is true that BC was yet facing critical shortcomings in 1942-1943 and “still hesitantly gathering [of] its strength”,²¹ but in two years its progress in terms of training (development of crews’ training and specialisation), tactical (night flying formations) and operational (testing of Pathfinder) prowess, and improvement of aircraft (from Avro Type 679 Manchester into Type 683 Lancaster), radar, radio countermeasures and navigational technologies, had been immense. Additionally, the aircraft and ordnance industries had revolutionised and moved from manufacturing “in 1938 a mere 2,828 aircraft [...] with an average structure weight of 3,472 lb [...] to 26,461 aircraft with average weight leaping to 7,880 lb [by 1944].”²²

¹⁷ [The Allied bombing of German cities in World War II was unjustifiable](#) The particular reference to “Exercise Thunderbolt” starts at 35’44”. Accessed on 16/04/2022.

¹⁸ No.5 Bomber Group Air Officer Commanding (AOC) in November 1940, DCAS in May 1941-May 1942 and July 1943-August 1945, and finally Commander in Chief (CiC) Bomber Command (BC) in September 1945.

¹⁹ Orange, *Tedder*, p. 326.

²⁰ AIR2/4476, Bottomley-Baldwin, 14 February 1942, quoted in Richard John Worrall, ““The termination of the long immunity from air raids’: The bombing of Berlin under operation Operation *Tannenberg*, August 1942-March 1943”, *War in History*, 29:2 (2022), p. 488, fn. 11.

²¹ Max Hastings, *Bomber Command* (London: Papermac, 1993), p. 141.

²² Stephen Broadberry and Peter Howlett, “Blood, Sweat, and Tears: British Mobilization for World War II”, in R. Chickering, S. Förster, and B. Greiner, eds., *A World at Total War: Global Conflict and the Politics of Destruction, 1937-1945* (Cambridge: CUP, 2005), p. 161. For a more detailed explanation of the different problems the British aircraft industry dealt with, and specifically the “failure to fulfil aircraft production programmes”, see Corelli L. Barnett, *The Audit of War: The Illusion and Reality of Britain as a Great Nation* (London: Pan Books, 1986), pp. 143-158.

Harris also gained valuable lessons by observing the two previous leaders of BC. As such Harris is said to have especially admired the figure of Air Marshal Edgar Ludlow-Hewitt (C-in-C BC, September 1937- March 1940), whom he believed, “was far and away the most brilliant officer I have ever met in any of the three Services.”²³ He also repeatedly told historian Denis Richards that, “Anything you could do, Portal could do better!”²⁴ The fact that Harris had the highest opinion of two of his predecessors is an acknowledgement that his challenges of high command were in essence made much easier by those commanders who preceded him. For example, the immense political pressure which Ludlow had to endure in the fatal year of 1940 cannot be compared to that of Harris. Ludlow’s determination to create Operational Training Units (OTUs) to improve crew preparedness (and facilitating “crewing-up) when transitioning between Flying Training Schools and the Operational Squadrons clashed with the political desire to increase the front-line bomber force.

Disillusionment in and out BC reached its peak in 1941 following the revelation in August 1941 of ‘The Butt Report’ and its devastating analysis on bombing accuracy. By September 1941, Churchill confessed to AM Charles Portal, Chief of Air Staff (CAS), to have serious doubts on “whether bombing by itself will be a decisive factor in the present war”;²⁵ and worst of all, it had started to spread along the ranks an state of mind by which, “faith in the bomber offensive had been seriously shaken”, as Donald C. T. Bennett, Commanding Officer 77 Squadron, wrote in December.²⁶ The end of 1941 also saw Portal losing his confidence in AM Richard Peirse as C-in-C BC, who according to Max Hastings, “seemed to have little grasp of operational realities, and he was a convenient scapegoat.”²⁷ What convinced Portal that Peirse had to go was above all his decision to ignore the weather broadcast for the raid against Berlin on 7 November 1940, an overlook which caused BC to lose 21 bombers out of 169 sent against Berlin.²⁸ He was also accused of lacking diligence when calculations of the petrol needed for a safe return when facing high winds were “near the bone”. His mission report was found lacking “detailed analysis”, and most disturbing of all, his denunciation of the crews’ lack of training and inexperience, something of which he was the ultimate responsible.²⁹

²³ Denis Richards, *RAF Bomber Command in The Second World War: The Hardest Victory* (London: Penguin Books, 2001), p. 18.

²⁴ Denis Richards *et al.*, “Portal, Harris and the Bomber Offensive”, *Proceedings of the Royal Air Force Historical Society*, Issue No. 6 (September 1989), p. 16.

²⁵ Charles Messenger, *‘Bomber’ Harris and the Strategic Bombing Offensive, 1939-1945* (London: Arms and Armour Press, 1984), p. 50.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 52.

²⁷ Hastings, *Bomber Command*, p. 126. Vincent Orange also described Peirse as “cunning, deceitful, and [...] ruthless”, and “one must add [his] crassness [as DCAS in 1938]”. Vincent Orange, *Slessor: Bomber Champion* (London: Grub Street, 2006), pp. 51, 87.

²⁸ Martin Middlebrook and Chris Everitt, *The Bomber Command War Diaries: An Operational Reference Book, 1939-1945* (London: Penguin Books, 1990), p. 217. 101 Wellingtons (10 lost), 42 Whitleys (9), 17 Stirlings (2), 9 Halifaxes were dispatched. 12.4 percent were lost and only 73 reached the urban limits of Berlin.

²⁹ Charles Weaver and Noble Frankland, *History of the Second World War: The Strategic Air Offensive against Germany 1939-1945, Vol. I: Preparation* (London: HMSO, 1961), pp. 255-56.

It might seem that this event bears no relation to understanding Harris leadership, but it does in an indirect way. The fact that Harris' memoirs omitted this event as well as any mention or criticism of Peirse can be interpreted as loyalty to his "Bomber Barons",³⁰ and a veiled defence of him can also be seen when Harris acknowledged that, "When I took up my Command the bomber force had played its very great part in stopping the projected invasion of England".³¹ A much stronger defence of BC under Peirse can be seen in the note Harris sent to Churchill on 28 June 1942 when he criticised "the purely defensive use of air power [and the Naval employment of aircraft as] grossly wasteful":³² His strong sense of loyalty was a peculiar aspect of his leadership, and he ensured old friends whose "ideas about bombing were absolutely sound", such as Air Vice-Marshal (AVM) Robert Saundby,³³ would be right next to him.

The reasons why after fifteen months Portal decided to remove Peirse as C-in-C BC in early 1942 indicates that a problem of leadership has also developed inside Bomber Command, and to solve it, a new strong figure was needed: Arthur Harris.³⁴ Most historians believe that Harris is what BC urgently needed in 1942. "He was major factor pulling Bomber Command together".³⁵ "There can be little doubt about the striking effect that Harris's arrival had on the force."³⁶ "Harris had acquired a reputation as a man of action able to work toward a goal with great energy and determination."³⁷ What remains unclear however is how Harris' leadership was influenced by observing previous BC leaders.

He never forgot how Ludlow was accused of "depressing pessimism"³⁸ when he voiced his professional view that without proper training bomber squadrons would continue to suffer untenable losses. It was clear to Harris that his leadership had to be based on "my principle to prevent negative-mindedness amongst my staff".³⁹ This was important for high morale, creating a "can-do" attitude and reinforcing the prestige of BC in front of other armed services and politicians. On the contrary, this particularity of Harris' leadership also meant that he did

³⁰ Worrall, "The bombing of Berlin under operation Operation *Tannenberg*, August 1942-March 1943", p. 494. In the original paragraph this term was referring to Portal and Harris. I thought it could also be used to incorporate those senior officers in BC who were very close to Harris, such as his senior air staff officer AVM Robert Saundby, AVM D.C.T. Bennett, AOC 8 Group, AVM R.A. Cochrane, AOC 5 Group, and so on.

³¹ Harris, *Bomber Offensive*, p. 73.

³² Arthur Harris, "The Role and Work of Bomber Command: A Note by Air Marshal Sir Arthur Harris for the Prime Minister and Cabinet, 28 June 1942", *Canadian Military History*, 4:2 (1995), p.111.

³³ Harris, *Bomber Offensive*, p. 71.

³⁴ Before Harris was able to take effective command after the dismissal of Peirse, the Acting C-in-C BC was given to Air Vice-Marshal James 'Jack' Baldwin, No.3 Bomber Group AOC.

³⁵ John Buckley, *Air Power in the Age of Total War* (London: Indiana UP, 1999), p. 157; John Buckley and Paul Beaver, *The Royal Air Force: The first one hundred years* (Oxford: OUP, 2018), p. 100.

³⁶ Richard Overy, *Why the Allies Won* (London: Pimlico, 2006), p. 136.

³⁷ Tami Davis Biddle, *Rhetoric and Reality in Air Warfare: The Evolution of British and American Ideas about Strategic Bombing, 1914-1945* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 2002), p.197.

³⁸ Richards, *RAF Bomber Command in The Second World*, p. 31.

³⁹ Harris, *Bomber Offensive*, p. 50.

not tolerate differing opinions,⁴⁰ which in essence curtailed open debates between his staff and group commanders. This was the case when in February 1943 Harris removed AVM Alec Coryton as Air Officer Commanding (AOC) 5 Group on the grounds of disagreement over ‘political’ attacks against Berlin, something which Churchill needed to demonstrate Stalin he was doing everything in his power to assist Russia on the Eastern front. Coryton was very much against risking his crews for this kind of operation, and clashed with Harris, who happened to be lobbying for greater resources using the bombing of Berlin as a trump card to win further political commitment.⁴¹ Harris also believed that, “In practice, even in 1943, the strength of the force was insufficient [and] the mere size of this sprawling city of four million inhabitants [...] meant that no noticeable impression could be made on it except by a strong force of heavy bombers.”⁴² He agreed with Coryton that small operations against Berlin carried a “consequent risk of very serious casualties”,⁴³ but he was ready to take whatever risks if this would give him the fleet he needed to defeat Nazi Germany - alone.⁴⁴ In defending his decision to sack Coryton, Harris told him that, “where you fail is through your inability to divest yourself of a moral responsibility which is not yours.”⁴⁵ The truth was less noble as Harris was in charge of “running the show”, and consequently, “[he] was the only person entitled to say “no” [and] always instructed the heads of departments to reserve negative replies for themselves”.⁴⁶ This episode demonstrates that Harris, while loyal and rewarding when complete obedience was given, also placed enormous importance to discipline. It also indicates that Harris' leadership resembled that of “Transactional” style whereby a “parent-child” (rewards and punishment) relationship is established.⁴⁷ Some of the latest articles published also seem to concur with Harris' leadership being “authoritarian” and “autocratic”.⁴⁸

Another aspect of his leadership was his ability to create a strong *esprit de corps* by linking his public image with that of BC. He used the press to make his leadership visible and well-known nationwide, making his famous phrase “Let them have it right on the chin” become a rallying cry.⁴⁹ He also used a plain and straightforward language to be recognised in his organisation as “one of their own”.⁵⁰ However it must be noted that this sort of retaliation language was

⁴⁰ Henry Probert, *Bomber Harris: His Life and Times* (London: Greenhill Books, 2003), p. 207.

⁴¹ Worrall, “The bombing of Berlin under operation Operation *Tannenberg*, August 1942-March 1943”, p. 503.

⁴² Arthur Harris, *Despatch on War Operations, 23rd February, 1942, to 8th May, 1945* (London: Frank Cass, 1995), p. 20.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ Victor Bissonnette, “Operational Research and the British Bombing Offensive against Germany, 1941-1945”, *War in History*, 25:4 (2018), p. 537. According to this author, “BC opted largely in favour of the maximization of the offensive and therefore gave the minimization of its losses a much lower priority.”

⁴⁵ Probert, *Bomber Harris*, p. 207.

⁴⁶ Harris, *Bomber Offensive*, p. 50.

⁴⁷ Chuck Holmes, “Army Leadership Styles: Tips and Ideas”, <https://www.part-time-commander.com/army-leadership-styles/>. Accessed on 03/05/2022.

⁴⁸ Worrall, “The bombing of Berlin under operation Operation *Tannenberg*, August 1942-March 1943”, p. 503; Bissonnette, “Operational Research and the British Bombing Offensive against Germany, 1941-1945”, p. 537.

⁴⁹ <https://www.britishpathe.com/video/on-the-chin/query/wildcard>. Quote located between 8’10” and 8’13”. Accessed 05/05/2022.

⁵⁰ Probert, *Bomber Harris*, pp. 201-202.

frequently used at all levels since London and other cities started to be bombed. “And these rapiers [of the RAF] will tear more deeply and more destructively into the flesh and blood of Germany in the coming months than they ever had before”, warned Sir Archibald Sinclair, Secretary of State for Air, at the English Speaking Union on 3 March 1941.⁵¹ Or even in more unequivocal terms like the one Churchill proclaimed in a newsreel in early June 1942:

The civil population of Germany have however an easy way to escape from these severities. All they have to do is to leave the cities where ammunition work is being carried on, abandon their work, and *go out into the fields and watch their homes' fire burning from the distance.*⁵²

In summary, Harris charisma and leadership helped to increase BC morale and esprit de corps through discipline, selection of personnel well tested in operational conditions, operational proficiency, and the use of press and the newsreels - attention which would drastically diminish as soon as Allied armies started to advance towards Germany, making him to bitterly complain when the press focused too much on the artillery and fighters.⁵³ However his leadership also suffered from all too common maladies: a blind application of rules in hope of success, distrust of criticism, disdainful of mistakes, overlook of the worst case analysis (especially if it came from civilian advisors or the meteorological office),⁵⁴ doubtful of tactical and operational innovations (“the Pathfinder Force would only be formed ‘over my dead body’”),⁵⁵ and a quick disposition to believe information which matched his own convictions.⁵⁶ His leadership in general terms was not very different to that of The Great War generals in the sense that he performed traditionally in a highly technological environment. Paradoxical as it might seem he seems to have continued the 1916-18 tradition of fire tactics of victory over “shock” tactics. No doubt his leadership would have benefited had he managed to reduce the outrageous 41 per cent aircrews loss.⁵⁷ For example, he could have pressed for the development of a long-range fighter plane, or for an early development of the Pathfinder Force, or by being unpredictable and complicating the enemy's adaptation. His complete devotion to the ideal of strategic

⁵¹ <https://www.britishpathe.com/video/air-ministers-inspiring-speech/query/Sinclair>. Quote located between 37’’ and 55’’. Accessed on 1/05/2022.

⁵² [Uk/ Germany: Defence: World War 2: Raf Bomb Cologne - British Pathé](#). Churchill’s voice is heard between 13’’ and 51’’. Visited on 1/05/2022. My emphasis.

⁵³ Tami Davis Biddle, “Bombing by the Square Yard: Sir Arthur Harris at War, 1942-1945”, *The International History Review*, 21:3 (1999), pp. 655-656.

⁵⁴ Christina Goulter in Sheffield, *The Challenges of High Command*, p. 132; Harris, *Bomber Offensive*, p. 72: “Meteorology is an inexact science; [...] and our climate [in North-West Europe] being what it is, I should have been able to justify myself completely if I had left the whole force on the ground, if I had done nothing whatever, on nine occasions out of ten.”

⁵⁵ Air Vice-Marshal Bufton in Richards, *Proceedings of the Royal Air Force Historical Society*, p. 23.

⁵⁶ Christina Goulter in Sheffield, *The Challenges of High Command*, p. 133; Probert, *Bomber Harris*, p. 101.

⁵⁷ Harris mentioned in Bissonnette, *War in History*, p. 536, fn. 5.

bombing decisiveness made his leadership suffer of “single-mindedness, or tunnel vision”,⁵⁸ and like Goering, “had trouble thinking at strategic and operational levels.”⁵⁹

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⁵⁸ Buckley, “Reviewed Work: Sir Arthur T. Harris”, p. 484.

⁵⁹ John L. Hudson, “The Luftwaffe of 1940 and the United States Air Force of 1991: Case Studies of the Strategic/Operational Connections in Air Warfare”, Operations Department US Naval War College, 21 June 1991, p. 4. Unpublished paper.

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