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## "Fortress without a Roof: The Allied Bombing of the Third Reich," and "Forged in Fire: Strategy and Decisions in the Air War over Europe, 1940-45"

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then this little book's great strength is in these pre-1939 years.

The attention given to pre-1914 imaginings and expectations is very good, as are the crude executions of the proposition during 1914-1918. But by far the best and most instructive part of the book is in the 66 pages devoted to the interwar years. It was in this period that "the bomber will always get through" mentality was developed, and it took shape as a "magic weapon" which practically paralyzed rational political action by the end of the 1930s. The bombing campaigns of World War II cannot be understood, nor their results adequately assessed, unless they are measured against the exaggerated expectations spawned during these 20 years.

If the book has a shortcoming it is that its text ends in 1945, whereas, the myths of strategic bombing continued to be cultivated and acted upon thereafter. There are 36 years between the Wrights' flights at Kitty Hawk and 1939, years in which the expectations of bombing came in one-ton packages. Since 1945 we have witnessed 38 years slip by—the hardware has changed dramatically, the results now are packaged in megatons, but the exaggerated expectations remain much the same. However, if there is a "lesson" to be drawn from any history of strategic bombing, it is to be found in those interwar years of which this book gives our first good glimpse.

RICHARD K. SMITH  
Washington, DC

Morrison, Wilbur H. *Fortress without a Roof: The Allied Bombing of the Third Reich*. New York: St Martin's Press, 1982. 322pp. \$16.95

Copp, DeWitt S. *Forged in Fire: Strategy and Decisions in the Air War over Europe, 1940-45*. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1982. 531pp. \$19.95

Mr. Morrison's *Fortress without a Roof* is the best single-volume treatment of the RAF and USAAF bombing campaigns over Europe that has appeared since Alfred Price's *Battle over the Reich* (1973). While it is true that his emphasis is on the American side, he is far more successful than most writers in tracing the interrelationships with the RAF's Bomber Command, in particular the differences in doctrine, equipment, and targeting philosophies so often slighted in accounts centering on the US 8th, 12th, and 15th air forces.

Professional historians will be less pleased than laymen, however, citing an inadequate bibliography, the absence of footnotes, rather a bit too much jumping about in time between and among paragraphs, and what is often derisively referred to as an anecdotal style. And, regrettably but inevitably, the less expert such critics re on the Combined Bomber Offensive, the more likely they shall be to register such complaints! But for anyone looking for a readable and reasonably thorough account squeezed into 300 moderately sized pages, and one that does not avoid controversy, Morrison's volume is a good place to start.

Mr. Morrison relies primarily on standard secondary sources, a few private papers, and interviews with participants. (His personal experience was in the Pacific with the 20th Air Force and served him well in *Point of No Return*, published in 1979; a further volume on carrier aviation in the Pacific, *Above and Beyond*, is forthcoming.) His method is to tell the story at every level, from the Combined Chiefs of Staff down to individual crews and crewmembers. He is at his best at the level of the senior air commanders, both British and American, and when recounting the problems they faced in surmounting the difficulties attendant to conducting an improvised air war with improvised air forces against a determined and experienced enemy. The controversies surrounding bomber employment—in North Africa, in support of the Normandy invasion, and against targets selected by ground forces commanders—are spelled out clearly; so too the controversy surrounding the employment of fighter escorts once they became available; so too the famous air battles of Ploesti, Schweinfurt, and Berlin.

Finally, the book certainly does not lack a point of view. Morrison recognizes that “few serious arguments are settled for good,” but he nonetheless comes down solidly on the side of those like Ira C. Eaker, Haywood S. Hensell, and Albert Speer, who hold that Germany’s collapse could have come in 1944 rather than 1945 had the airmen been given six months of uninterrupted and undiverted attacks,

based on the original target plan, and beginning in April 1944. As he notes in the first sentence of his Introduction, “This is a story of faith [held] by men of conviction who believed that a country could be defeated by strategic air power without a costly invasion by ground troops.”

Even more a story of faith is DeWitt Copp’s *Forged in Fire* which, like Morrison’s book, is the second in a series. (The first, *A Few Great Captains*, was published in 1980 and is now in its third printing.) The earlier volume recounted the early lives and careers of a handful of airmen—principally Frank M. Andrews, Henry H. Arnold, Carl A. Spaatz, and Ira C. Eaker—who were instrumental in forging the Army Air Corps in the years between the wars. This second volume carries the story forward from March of 1940, allegedly to the end of the war in Europe but in effect only until early 1944.

Copp’s credentials as historian, novelist, and film writer combine to make this a whiz-bang story of the travails suffered by those charged with putting together the American side of the bomber offensive: the utter turmoil in Washington during 1940-41; the sorting out of resources and personalities that was the necessary preliminary to action; the frustrations that broke some men in the process; the unceasing squabbling with the navy, “which had gone on for so long [among the army airmen that] it was in the nature of a tradition, a kind of chronic watching for an attack out of the sun that kept a pilot on his toes.” Names central to the tale, in addition

to those mentioned above, include those of Jimmy Doolittle, Curt LeMay, Monk Hunter, Possum Hansell, Hugh Knerr, Pete Quesada, Ken Walker, Frank Armstrong [the model for General Savage in *Twelve O'Clock High*], Larry Kuter, Larry Norstad, and Hoyt Vandenberg. The central roles remain those of Andrews, until his accidental death in May 1943; Arnold, throughout the story unquestionably portrayed as the hardest man to work for that anyone could imagine; Spaatz, whom the author looks on as "the U.S. Grant of the strategic bombing offensive"; and Eaker, who, when sent to England early in 1942, became "the point man in an experiment that had been twenty years in the making." In this recounting it is Eaker who shines through as the central hero, constantly buffeted in a two-front war—"one against the enemy and one against 'friends' at home."

Again, as with Morrison, but this time less so, the professional historians will mumble about the sparse documentation and seeming randomness of footnoting. They would do well to be wary in this instance, however, since those who have made this subject a specialty at one time or other will be quick to observe that Copp's extensive use of the documents and wide-ranging interviews invariably leads him as close to the truth as anyone is by this point likely to get. Better than any other published work, this one takes us (to borrow from Walt Rostow in another context) "into the arena of power, vested interest, and person-

ality—where forces quite different from straightforward intellectual argument were at work." It is for this reason that anyone from any service who is headed into the maelstrom of "the Washington planning arena" cannot fail to benefit from a thoughtful perusal of these pages.

The one disappointment for this reviewer is that the book ends too soon. The period from January 1944 to April 1945, the final fifteen months of the air war, is compressed into a concluding 28-page chapter. Given that more than 72 percent of the bombs dropped over Europe fell after 1 July 1944, that the full weight of the offensive was not unleashed on Germany until after the Normandy lodgement was secure, it is regrettable that more space was not available in which to chronicle the full effects, long delayed, of the air offensive. This point, however, is not so much a criticism of what Mr. Copp has achieved as it is a suggestion that a better subtitle was available: *The Struggle to Mount the Air Offensive over Europe, 1940-1943*.

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Compton-Hall, Richard. *The Underwater War, 1939-1945*. New York; Sterling Publishing, 1982. 160pp. \$19.95

The author is a very experienced submariner who has been closely associated with the submarine world, both nuclear and conventional, for over 30 years. He is presently