Return from the Wilderness: An Assessment of Arthur Harris' Moral Responsibility for the German City Bombings

By Dr Peter Lee

Arthur 'Bomber' Harris divides public, military and academic opinion like few military figures before or since. For some, Harris was, and remains, a hero of the titanic struggle against Hitler's Reich and the evil it spawned across Europe; for others he was a fearsome and inspiring leader who sparked great loyalty among those who took to the skies at his command; yet others regard him as a war criminal who evaded prosecution only because he found himself on the winning side. This article will consider another image of Harris, the scapegoat to whom it fell to publicly bear the moral culpability of others who bore greater responsibility for the shedding of blood and innocence in those dark hours when explosives and incendiaries were dropped on the cities of Germany. The paper concludes that to some degree it was his own cussed stoicism and lack of political intuition that made his emergence as scapegoat both convenient and almost inevitable.

> But the goat chosen by lot as the scapegoat shall be presented alive before the Lord to be used for making atonement by sending it into the wilderness as a scapegoat ... The goat will carry on itself all their sins to a remote place. (Leviticus 16:10, 22)[1]

Introduction

Few names, if any, in British military history divide opinion like that of Arthur T. Harris, Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief (AOC-in-C), Bomber Command from February 1942 until September 1945. Few names conjure up such a spectrum of human responses: from devoted loyalty to personal abhorrence, from admiration to disgust. For some, Harris was, and remains, a hero of the titanic struggle against Hitler's Reich and the evil it spawned across Europe; for others he was a fearsome and inspiring leader who sparked great loyalty among those who took to the skies at his command; yet others regard him as a war criminal who evaded prosecution only because he found himself on the winning side. This article will consider another image of Harris, the scapegoat to whom it fell to publicly bear the sins – the moral culpability – of others who bore greater responsibility for the shedding of blood and innocence in those dark hours when explosives and incendiaries were dropped on the cities of Germany.

Two factors will shape the analysis to follow: the historical context in which Harris led Bomber Command and the moral framework against which his actions are assessed. American political theorist and just war ethicist Jean Bethke Elshtain, in evaluating the US's response to a twenty-first century air attack on its most iconic city, highlights the enduring relationship between factual detail and moral judgement: 'There is no substitute for the facts. If we get our description of events wrong, our analysis and our ethics will be wrong too. The words we use and our evaluation of events are imbedded with important moral principles'.[2] If these sentiments are true when making moral judgements about recent events, then they are no less true when it comes to making moral judgements about past events: with the added complications of elapsed time and the imperfect filters of the views and influences of historians past.

This article, as with almost all Bomber Command historiography since 1961, relies considerably on Charles Webster and Noble Frankland's T*he Strategic Air Offensive Against Germany 1939-1945*[3], both for the official documents it makes available to us and for the authors' analysis of those events. Though widely viewed as the official history of the strategic air offensive and highly regarded for its content it will, as should all historical documents, be treated with a degree of caution. It is not a faultless, unexpurgated, objective historical edifice but, as Sebastian Cox points out, the product of political machination, academic predilection and robust negotiation.[4] Furthermore, it should be borne in mind that Harris neither contributed to the document nor defended his actions in light of its claims. Just as all politics has its history, all history has its politics.

When it comes to the moral assessment of Harris's actions – having provided some historical context – the comfortable familiarity and certainties of absolute ethical arguments will be

rejected. Harris and his superiors were never afforded the luxury of simple strategic or moral decisions: they frequently had to choose between two courses of action – each of which would cause any sensible individual to recoil with horror – and embrace the lesser of two evils. The simplistic views of those who consider(ed) Harris to have been the walking embodiment of evil are rejected as surely as views of those who uncritically extol his actions as entirely virtuous. Moral certainty is too often the refuge of those who fear their own doubts or evade their own passions. Instead this article opts for the discomfort that emerges when Harris's actions are exposed to a comparative ethical evaluation, drawing upon elements from the just war tradition and utilitarian considerations.

The first section will explore early practical and moral concerns about, and strategic hopes for, aerial bombing, drawing upon the writings of J.M. Spaight to highlight both doomed noble intentions and ominous warnings from the 1920s and '30s – notably the failure of leading powers to legally constrain the threat posed by rapidly evolving aircraft technology to cities in future wars. This will be followed by an examination of some of the Second World War's early bombing developments, noting the speed with which previous dire predictions were coming to pass, the rapid emergence of moral ambivalence in both political and military hierarchies, and the strategic implications of Bomber Command's inability to conduct precision bombing. Sections three and four will analyse aspects of the politics and morality of targeting in light of improving technology during Harris's time as AOC-in-C, Bomber Command, contrasting the dilemmas of the early years of the war with those of the final year. Attention will be paid to the directives to which he operated, the wider strategic considerations that shaped the directives and Harris's interpretation of them, and the disputed causes and consequences of the later area bombings, particularly the bombing of Dresden. The paper will conclude, first, that Harris has borne a disproportionate degree of moral responsibility for the area bombing of Germany, his personal culpability dwarfed by that of others and mitigated by the limited options available to him; and second, somewhat ironically, that to some degree it was his own cussed stoicism and lack of political intuition that made his emergence as scapegoat almost inevitable.

Aerial Bombing: Dire Predictions, Noble Intentions and Cautious Warnings

Since its inception air power discourse has been characterised by two interrelated but, at times, opposing strands of thought: on one side there was a determination to limit the use of air power – especially against civilians – both in terms of proposed laws and ethical arguments; on the other side there was the development of air power strategy for maximum effect against a future enemy in a time of increasingly industrialised war. This dichotomy was not rooted in the First World War but emerged even before the advent of powered flight, exemplified by the 1899 Hague Convention's five-year moratorium (not subsequently extended) on 'the launching of projectiles and explosives from balloons, or by other new methods of a similar nature'.[5]

Only a decade later future applications of air power were being debated in the UK Parliament.

On 16 March 1909 Lord Montagu of Beaulieu, in a House of Lords Debate, identified the bombing of civilian targets as a matter of military concern, given the potential damage that could be done by aerial bombardment to 'a Government office, railway bridge, bank, or dockyard'.[6] Five months later Arthur Lee MP was making even more dire predictions to the House of Commons about the physical threat of aerial bombing to capital cities, using rapidly developing aeroplanes, dirigibles and balloons. He extended his argument – speculation might be more accurate – to anticipate that the 'moral effect' of bombing from airships would exceed the 'material effect,' and that, further, bombing at night would exaggerate these effects.[7] Almost a decade before the creation of the Royal Air Force, Lee had enunciated a number of ideas that would be reiterated in the decades to follow: civilian bombing; demoralising effect on the enemy's military operations; night operations; and a moral effect that outweighed material effect. He also recognised that the application of air power in this way would have consequences beyond potential physical destruction: 'We do not know what disturbance [such a use of aircraft] will cause in our laws, customs, and convenience; but these matters will no doubt be adjusted'.[8] These matters would come to be adjusted far more than Lee or his fellow MPs could have imagined.[9]

Tami Biddle Davis describes the historical development of strategic bombing from those earliest days as 'a history of the tension between imagined possibilities and technical realities'.[10] The application of air power in the First World War[11] demonstrated the limitations of the latter without denting the certainty, especially for theorists like Hugh Trenchard and Guilio Douhet in the 1920s, that the former would eventually come to fruition. Similarly, such possibilities did not escape the attentions of political leaders anxious not to find their countries made vulnerable by new technology, or legalists who strived to constrain bombing in the future. Concurrent with technical and doctrinal developments, the most serious attempt to limit future applications of bombing was undertaken by the Hague Commission of Jurists between December 1922 and February 1923. The final report set out *Rules for Aerial Warfare*, which provided for extensive protection of civilians and emphasized the need to target only military objectives:

> Article 24.1. An air bombardment is legitimate only when is directed against a military objective, i.e. an objective whereof the total or partial destruction would constitute an obvious military advantage for the belligerent;
>
> Article 24.3. Any bombardment of cities, towns, villages, habitations and building which are not situated in the immediate vicinity of the operations of the land forces, is forbidden.[12]

When the most industrially developed states weighed up the both the strategic possibilities and humanitarian costs of aerial bombing they came down in favour of the former, refusing to ratify the Hague Rules and pass them into law. Peter Gray writes of this outcome: 'The conventional view, therefore, was (and remains) that they were a political and legal failure'.[13] They remain, however, a reminder of the good intentions, cautious hopes and, to some

extent, wishful thinking that occupied the complex global political environs of the 1920s.[14] The attraction of aerial bombing for political and military leaders at that time can be summed up in the words of the British military strategist, Basil Liddell Hart, who observed in 1925 – based on his reading of events in the First World War – that a population's will to fight would not match its army's will to fight and that 'if we can demoralise one section of the nation, the collapse of its will to resist compels the surrender of the whole'.[15]

Those sentiments underpinned Trenchard's bombing doctrine and his vision for the future deployment of air power in war. In 1928 he wrote to the Chiefs of Staff Sub-Committee: 'It is not, however, necessary for an air force, in order to defeat the enemy nation, to defeat its armed forces first. Air power can dispense with that intermediate step, can pass over the enemy navies and armies, and penetrate the air defences and attack direct the centres of production, transport and communication from which the enemy war effort is maintained.'[16] As well as arguing on grounds of military effectiveness, Trenchard pointed out that on the question of legality, it would be entirely lawful 'to bomb military objectives, wherever situated'.[17] The sole limitation that he would grant as illegitimate was 'the indiscriminate bombing of a city for the sole purpose of terrorising the civilian population', though he accepted that such 'moral effect' might be the *consequence* 'of a lawful operation of war – the bombing of a military objective.'[18] The future justification of area bombing would therefore be located in the conceptual terrain that sits between the pursuit of terrorising civilians as an end in itself and the terrorising of civilians as a secondary effect of creating chaos, dislocation and disruption of everyday life as a means of reducing a state's (later, Germany's) war-making capability. Doubts about Trenchard's proposals were raised, almost inevitably, by George Milne, Chief of the Imperial General Staff, who sought to place political constraints on 'what practically amounts to an independent form of strategy for the Royal Air Force'.[19] Milne was little swayed by subtle argument, stressing: 'the point of real importance to this Empire, and about which there should be no doubt, is the practical aspect; in effect is such a [bombing] policy expedient?'[20] Milne spoke for many when he placed expediency above moral and legal considerations.

Throughout this inter-war period, a crucial voice in the bombing debates belonged to J.M. Spaight, from his involvement in the 1922-3 Hague negotiations through to his shaping of policy at the Air Ministry in the 1930s and '40s. Despite Spaight's legal orientation and efforts in the attempts to abolish or place limits on bombing, he was also a pragmatist who was able to see beyond the idealism of restricting aerial warfare to recognise its war-fighting potential. As part of the First World War generation he believed that air power could and would be used unsparingly in any attempt to avoid a repeat of the great stalemate and slaughter of trench warfare: 'As a moral-breaking force of unmatched possibilities [air power] stands alone.'[21] Furthermore, he wrote: 'Let there be no mistake about it: the cities will be bombed, whatever rule is laid down. In no other way will belligerents be able to seek to obtain the moral effect which they will certainly seek'.[22] For Gray, 'This set the tone for the thinking in the Air Ministry and subsequently Bomber Command.'[23]

As war approached once more, Spaight maintained the view that in the choice between strategic advantage and ethical or legal constraint in war, the application of air power – especially the deployment of bombing – would be guided by the former over the latter. Writing in 1938 he hoped that military objectives in densely populated areas would not be bombed but recognised that such action would most likely occur.[24] He took the view that if such an 'abominable reality' emerged, 'old England will be able, however reluctantly, to give as much as she gets, and a little more'.[25] He anticipated that bombing would be used to 'destroy the enemy nation's moral, to intimidate its population into submission,' though he was convinced that such an impact upon morale would be achieved as a by-product or secondary effect of the pursuit of military effect.[26] With such an influential member of the Air Ministry publicly making such comments, the subsequent direction of bombing policy was taking shape.

Second World War: Early Exchanges

Following the outbreak of war it did not take long for area bombing to emerge as a destructive offensive tool. On 13 September 1939 the Luftwaffe attacked Warsaw using a 50:50 ratio of explosives to incendiaries in a clear attempt to use fire as a weapon of destruction against the city and its people. Combined with a further major incendiary attack almost two weeks later, the result was that 40% of the buildings in Warsaw were damaged, with 10% destroyed.[27] Further area bombings took place over the subsequent months and on 8 July 1940 Churchill wrote to Lord Beaverbrook, the Minister for War Production: 'When I look around to see how we can win the war I see that there is only one sure path ... there is one thing that will bring him back and bring him down, and that is an absolutely devastating, exterminating attack by very heavy bombers from this country upon the Nazi homeland. We must be able to overwhelm him by this means, without which I do not see a way through.[28]

The widely accepted strategic potential of bombing that had been debated and disputed for two decades came to the fore at a time when the UK fought desperately to repel the Luftwaffe's pre-invasion attempt to gain air superiority over the English Channel. Three months previously, on 13 April 1940, an Air Ministry directive to Charles Portal, then AOC-in-C, Bomber Command had informed him that his bombing objectives were to include oil plants in the Ruhr, electricity plants, self-illuminating objectives vulnerable to air attack, troop concentrations and communications in the Ruhr.[29] In addition, and relevant to later discussion about Harris's freedom of operation, Portal was even told what aircraft should be deployed and what munitions might be used to best effect. The force at his disposal would include 'Nos. 3,4 and a proportion of 5 Groups,' and, 'Long-delay-action bombs may be used'.[30] The latter were intended to disrupt the fire services, civil reconstruction, and the return to relative normality.

Despite the UK's plight Churchill was determined, at least in public, to maintain a veneer of ethical restraint. On 20 August 1940 he stated to the House of Commons: 'we must never forget that all the time, night after night, month after month, our bomber squadrons travel

far into Germany, find their targets in the darkness by the highest navigational skill, aim their attacks, often under the heaviest fire, often with serious loss, *with deliberate careful discrimination*'.[31] Ironically, Hitler's description of those events was probably more accurate when he spoke of RAF bombers being unable to 'penetrate German airspace during the day' and dropping bombs on 'civilian residential centres, on farmsteads, and villages'.[32] There can be no mistaking Hitler's intentions however, even if they were unrealistic at the time, when he went on to speak of dropping a million kilograms of bombs in a night and eradicating British cities.[33] The London Blitz would demonstrate Hitler's determination to add substance to his threat.

In the weeks that followed, Churchill and his Air Ministry advisors added a new dimension to the latest Bomber Command directive. While still emphasizing operations against the German aircraft industry, submarine industry, communications and oil resources the directive concluded that 'attacks on [Berlin] and its environs should be continued from time to time when favourable weather conditions permit. The primary aim of these attacks will be to cause the greatest possible disturbance and dislocation both to the industrial activities and to the civil population generally within the area.[34] There was an unmistakable introduction of civilians into the calculations and decisions made by the British political and military strategists: exactly as predicted by Spaight, Liddell Hart and other inter-war air power theorists. In addition, the new AOC-in-C Bomber Command, Richard Peirse, was asked to target towns 'having regard to their size, distribution and the importance of the objectives they contain', before being instructed:

> (i) As many heavy bombers as possible should be detailed for the attack, carrying high explosive, incendiary and delay-action bombs with perhaps an occasional mine. The aim of the first sorties should be to cause fires, either on or in the vicinity of the targets so that they should carry a high proportion of incendiary bombs. Successive sorties should then focus their attacks to a large extent on the fires with a view to preventing the fire fighting services from dealing with them and giving the fires every opportunity to spread.
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> (ii) The objectives considered most suitable for these concentrated attacks are the sources of power, such as electricity generating stations and gas plants, and centres of communication; but where primary targets such as the oil and aircraft industry objectives are suitably placed in the centre of the towns or populated districts, they might also be selected.[35]

If the bombers were being successful in precisely striking their preferred military targets – oil, gas, aircraft and other industrial facilities – there would be no need to include incendiaries because the targets would have been destroyed. While in theory military targets were still being prioritized, in practice it had been recognized that a greater disrupting effect on German life and industrial production could be achieved where civilian abodes were destroyed as

a beneficial secondary effect. In ethical terms the primary intention could be said to be legitimate military targets. Furthermore, fire would most likely cause greater harm to targets and their environs than direct bomb blast, making it harder to conduct repairs and restore production. However, the burning and destroying of civilian areas with the consequent impact on civilian lives, homes and communities could not be said to be some secondary *unintended* consequence. From the early stages of the war they were clearly important targets in their own right: secondary, but *intended* targets. The bombers were to blow up or burn housing estates whether or not the nearby industrial targets were struck.

It is frequently pointed out that the Butt Report of August 1941 highlighted the failings of precision bombing – or perhaps more rightly scotched the notion of precision bombing – and prompted a shift towards area bombing and the targeting of civilian morale instead of key industrial nodes. Such a reading, however, is somewhat crude and misrepresentative of the situation Bomber Command found itself in. More than a month before the Butt Report was published the 9 July 1941 directive to AOC-in-C Bomber Command set out a new request: 'you will direct the main effort of the bomber force, until further instructions, towards dislocating the German transportation system and to destroying the morale of the civilian population as a whole and of the industrial workers in particular.[36] However, following the internal circulation of the Butt Report at the highest levels of the military and government in August 1941, by 14 February 1942 a directive to Acting AOC-in-C Bomber Command, J.E.A. Baldwin revealed the new strategic priority: 'the primary object of your operations should now be focussed on the morale of the enemy civilian population and in particular, of the industrial workers'.[37] Significantly, this brief overview of the trajectory of the directives to successive AOC-in-Cs Bomber Command illustrates that the policy shift from a focus on industrial targets such as oil production and aircraft manufacture to the focus on the morale of the enemy had taken place before Harris even took up his command on 23 February 1942.[38]

Harris: The Politics and Morality of Technology and Targeting

The appointment of Harris as AOC-in-C brought to Bomber Command a number of crucial, sometimes overlooked attributes. He had been a staunch advocate of the area bombing of major cities long before he was appointed: partly borne out of an awareness of the limitations of the accuracy of bomber aircraft, partly by a desire to avoid any repeat of the trench warfare that killed so many young men in the First World War[39], and partly because of previous successful deployment of bombing as a means of quelling rebellion in 'Irak' – as he called it – in the early 1920s.[40] However, he also brought a keen eye for detail and was, contrary to his caricature, open to innovative ideas. Probert says of Harris's time as AOC 5 Group, from 10 September 1939, that he was highly engaged in not only the technical side of bomber aircraft development and production but also in the training of crews and improving operational efficiency.[41] He concluded: 'So there emerges the picture of an operational commander with great driving force, constantly besieging his mind on how to rectify problems and do things better, and possessing deep knowledge of his business.'[42]

Concurrent with the newly appointed Harris's own deliberations on the most effectual way to bomb Germany, Professor Lindemann – Churchill's scientific advisor – was devising his own plans to increase the effectiveness of area bombing. On 30 March 1942 Lindemann wrote to Churchill with recommendations about how best to lay waste to German cities with a large fleet of bombers designed to carry payloads (explosives and incendiaries) that would de-house vast numbers of Germans: disrupting daily life, reducing industrial production, and damaging morale in the process.[43] Lindemann's assertions played an important role in reinforcing Winston Churchill's resolve to employ area bombing against German cities and setting out the template for its success.[44] It should be noted however, that Lindemann has his critics, and not just because he took such care in working out the best way to wreak havoc on civilian houses and their occupants (similarly, by February 1942 the Americans 'had identified areas of Tokyo particularly vulnerable to fire attack'[45]). For Biddle, Lindemann's approach was flawed, based on what she describes as 'problematical' interpretations of a report on the prior bombings of Birmingham and Hull.[46]

As Harris embarked on his leadership of Bomber Command, therefore, area bombing – using incendiaries – was already firmly established as the UK's preferred, and only, method of striking back at the German aggressor: based on what was considered at the time to be a sound scientific basis. Consequently, when we consider the directive to Harris on 5 May 1942 it should be borne in mind that he was merely continuing the previously existing policy, using equipment and munitions that had previously been procured to pursue it: 'Whilst the primary aim of your operations must remain the lowering of the morale of the enemy civilian population and in particular that of the workers in industrial areas vital to the enemy's war effort, every effort *consistent with this aim* should be made to reduce the output of aircraft factories, and particularly those producing fighter aircraft'.[47]

Efforts to limit German aircraft production were to be consistent with the aim of lowering the morale of the German people in general, and industrial workers in particular, not *vice versa*. However, this should not be read as advocating random attacks on civilians simply to create terror among the people, the *intention* of such an approach was to damage the German Air Force's ability to wage war by reducing the production of fighter aircraft in particular. The purpose of stressing these points here is not to start to re-argue the morality of the bomber offensive as a whole; many others have done so at length with varying degrees of engagement with the minutiae of historical detail and the broader sweep of philosophical analysis. The purpose is to highlight the degree to which Harris *inherited* the bombing policy that he was tasked with executing and the aircraft and munitions with which to do it, all driven by the Prime Minister who was, in turn, persuaded by the 'scientific' contribution of Lindemann. The fact that Harris was a convinced advocate of area bombing even before he took over Bomber Command would have been a crucial consideration for those, especially Portal, who appointed him. However, his personal predilections count for little in assessing his moral culpability in the bomber offensive as a whole, especially at this stage of the war with the options for striking Germany so limited

and the possibility of precision strikes, as people might have reasonably understood the phrase even then, impossible.

Directives continued to be issued in much the same vein over the coming months and years: 'subject the following bases to a maximum scale of attack by your Command at night with the object of effectively devastating the whole area in which are located the submarines, their maintenance facilities and the services, power, water, light, communications, etc. and other resources upon which their operations depend'.[48] The purpose of this area bombing was aimed at the related ends of the 'progressive destruction and dislocation of the German military, industrial and economic system, and the undermining of the morale of the German people to a point where their capacity for armed resistance is weakened'.[49] Terror was not advocated as an end in itself.

The moral assessment of events when these directives were given to Harris in January 1943 is probably more straightforward than it would become in the final year of the war, though aspects of it make for potentially uncomfortable reading for unquestioning area bombing advocates and opponents alike, depending upon the moral framework in use. It has been argued by many political theorists, perhaps most clearly in recent times by Elshtain, that just war is located on an ethical 'continuum', bounded by pacifism on one side and political realism on the other.[50] The absolute positions on the extremes of this continuum are the most straightforward to articulate when applied to Bomber Command's activities at the start of 1943. For the pacifist all resort to force is inherently wrong and should be rejected: there was no justification for the taking of human life even for the sake of national defence. For the political realist, in contrast, any such judgement was, and would remain, preposterous: the survival of the political collective under attack, the state (and Empire), transcended moral debate.

The application of just war reasoning to the situation is more complicated, with the *jus in bello* criteria of the just war tradition demanding proportionality of means and discrimination of combatant or other military targets.[51] If just war is approached as an absolute moral system whose criteria are applied as a straight choice between good and evil, the area bombing must be judged unjust. Because the deliberate killing of civilians – especially women and children not involved in industrial manufacture of weapons – violates the principle of discrimination. Furthermore, with the directives to Harris calling for him to use bombers to devastate whole areas[52] the just war get-out clause – the doctrine of double effect (I didn't *mean* to do it) – was similarly violated: deaths and other harm to civilians were intended.

The most (in)famous moral assessment of this aspect of the air offensive against Germany in the just war tradition was articulated by Michael Walzer in 1977 and is referred to as his 'supreme emergency' argument.[53] In his 'supreme emergency' Walzer allows for the waiving of the non-combatant immunity, and it occurs when a danger to the political community is overwhelming clear and imminent: a danger that is 'unusual and horrifying' and would result in

annihilation.[54] Even at Britain's lowest ebb before the United States had declared war against Germany in December 1941 it is questionable that the UK faced annihilation or similar. While it would be foolish to argue that the UK could, at that time, have launched a landing on mainland Europe and its army fought through to Berlin. However, its geographical positioning as an island with a substantial navy and air force and its political positioning within the British Empire, meant effective defence could have been maintained for a considerable time.

When viewed in this context, Walzer's supreme emergency argument cannot find legitimacy *within* the just war tradition: the deliberate killing of civilians precludes it from doing so and the degree of threat advocated by Walzer had not been met. Such an exception violates the deontological (rule-following) aspect of Walzer's just war in what he calls a 'legalist paradigm'.[55] In addition, given that the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights was not enacted until 1948, the rights-based ontology of Walzer's moral argument is open to the charge that he read such rights back into the events of the Second World War where they did not exist at the time. However, such observations do not completely negate the moral question. For this author, Walzer's supreme emergency argument does not exist within the outer limits of just war, but at the point at which such military action steps beyond the confines of just war into the realm of political realism and the need to protect the political community – the state – more than the need to protect the exigencies of just war thinking. Bellamy's considered understanding of the situation was that 'the British government and public reverted not to supreme emergency arguments but to a permissive doctrine of double effect. The British government deliberately misled its public about the purpose and aiming points of its bombing, and the public by and large accepted those erroneous claims'.[56] While this may well have been the case, the government's claims were not accepted without demur. David Hall explores in some detail not only the key debates that took place throughout the war in Parliament and beyond and the dissenting voices therein.[57] In particular, he highlights how the three wartime Archbishops of Canterbury brought the influence of the Church of England – then a more potent moral and political force than it is perceived today – to bear on the area bombing controversy.[58]

Returning to Bellamy, his cogent argument makes most sense when transposed to the level of the individual who comes under attack. (It is helpful to recall here that Aquinas' 13th century doctrine of double effect originally referred to individual homicidal self-defence and not to inter-state war[59]). Somebody who is in the process of being assaulted in the street is unlikely to be overly concerned about the means by which his or her protector stops the assailant's blows. However, once the attack is stopped there may subsequently be some awkwardness if the protector was seen to have resorted to the principles of the Glasgow razor gang rather than the Marquis of Queensbury rules. Survival brings with it that luxury, which today even has a name: survivor guilt.

An alternative moral reasoning that applies the just war criterion of proportionality to area bombing at the start of 1943 is less clear-cut than the individual-focused discrimination

argument – augmented by the doctrine of double effect – above. It also benefits from consideration of Augustine's just war in the fifth century: commonly acknowledged as the start of Western just war. As a theologian and bishop who practiced self-reflection and confession in a way that is still recognisable to modern Christians and non-religious self-help advocates alike,[60] Augustine was aware of humanity's capacity for evil and destruction. He was also aware of the complexity of human emotion, the dynamics of political communities from the family to the Roman Empire, the capacity for even the most God-fearing saint for sinfulness, and the capacity of evil-doers to sprinkle their debauched activities with occasional good. Elshtain describes that complexity: 'Augustine refuses to locate all good in one side, all evil in another – even, or most especially, in time of war'.[61] Consequently, when making a moral assessment of an activity like area bombing Augustine remains both relevant and disconcerting. It is uncomfortable to think that the Germany that gave the world Hitler's Reich and all it spawned also contained good: exemplified by martyrs such as Dietrich Bonhoeffer and the innocence of young children. That good was bombed, alongside the evil of munitions factories and aircraft manufacturers. Contrarily, not every British person that contributed to the attacks on Germany was a noble, honourable, reluctant dispenser of justice against an aggressor enemy. Vengeance and hatred could occupy a Lancaster bomber as easily as it could a Messerschmitt ME109. Returning to a comparative moral evaluation of the proportionality of area bombing, it is impossible to wholly separate causes, means and ends. There may have been blood on British hands but Hitler started the blood-letting. Should Churchill and the UK have withdrawn from the fight and allowed Hitler to strike continually and unopposed until his inevitable victory, his industrial might expanding continually without the damage, disruption and chaos inflicted by Bomber Command: even if it was much less than the pre-war air power prophets had anticipated? Nobody answered "No!" to that question more vociferously than Harris, so how should his actions be judged?

Augustine introduced into the just war tradition a notion of moral hierarchy that reflected his understanding of Divine teleological order. Augustine's ethical individual emerges in relation to war as follows:[62] 'when a soldier kills a man in obedience to the legitimate authority under which he served, he is not chargeable with murder by the laws of his country; in fact he is chargeable with insubordination and mutiny if he refuses. But if he did it of his own accord, on his own authority, he would be liable to a charge of homicide'.[63] The hierarchy of moral authority created by Augustine with regard to war takes the following form: soldier, general, legitimate [political] authority, the Creator [Augustine's God]. The higher up this hierarchy, the greater moral responsibility individuals bear, a pattern that is echoed today in a number of codes that set out the responsibilities of combatants and commanders.[64]

With Augustine's moral hierarchy in mind, what responsibility did Harris bear for his actions? Clearly he bore greater responsibility than the crews he ordered into action over Germany to drop High Explosives (HE) and incendiaries. Yet Harris had very little personal room for manoeuvre: his directives were set within a decision-making coalition of the Air Ministry

and the Joint Chiefs (with particular responsibility falling to Portal as Chief of the Air Staff), all overseen by Churchill and the War Cabinet. There is no scope within this paper to explore the minutiae of all the decisions relating to Bomber Command directives and the complex relationships within the hierarchy to which Harris answered.[65] Gray, helpfully, does provide a comprehensive insight into these relationships, describing how Churchill took on additional powers by appointing himself Minister of Defence alongside his responsibilities as Prime Minister, and quoting Churchill who said: 'fundamental changes in the machinery of war direction were more real than apparent'.[66] Furthermore, the particular influence of Portal on Churchill, and therefore on policy, is also explored by Gray who observed that Portal ' was able to persuade the Prime Minister without confrontation and had the analytical skills to be able to identify workarounds without compromising key principles'.[67] When Augustine's moral hierarchy is applied straightforwardly to the chain of command then it seems clear Harris should bear lesser moral responsibility with, correspondingly, the bomber crews bearing the least responsibility of all, and Portal and Churchill bearing the greater responsibilities respectively. Additionally, into the category of those who bear greater moral culpability than Harris for the area bombings also fall Lindemann, who provided the 'scientific' support that emboldened Churchill, the inter-war air power doctrinaires Trenchard and Douhet who spun such convincing tales about how effective the bombing of civilians would be, and Spaight and others at the Air Ministry who over several years helped transform doctrine into policy.[68] However, that broad summary of moral responsibility, like the chain of command itself, was not static, notably from Pointblank in 1943 until the end of the war.[69]

From Pointblank to Dresden

The Pointblank Directive of 10 June 1943 modified elements of the earlier directives and placed particular emphasis on 'the attack of German fighter forces and the industry in which they depend'.[70] However, there was an ongoing dispute between Harris and the British Air Staff regarding the best way to achieve that end: Harris preferring area bombing and the Air Staff preferring more precise targeting. However, intelligence limitations and the difficulty of conducting precision strikes – at least without prohibitive levels of Bomber Command losses – meant that the ideal and the possible were two distinct ends. The 'idealists' were keen to pursue precision bombing, which might more realistically be described as pursuing the illusion of precision bombing, while Harris used improvements in technology to facilitate more effective area attacks. Interestingly, in their later assessment of both bombing policy and practice Webster and Frankland were unable to establish whether, on the issue of precision versus area bombing, 'the Air Staff was right and [Harris] was wrong', but opined that 'it was Sir Arthur Harris who showed the more realistic appreciation of the possibilities'.[71]

That tension between a desire for precision strikes on the part of the Air Ministry – especially on oil, ball-bearing and communication targets – and Harris's conviction that area bombing was the most effective, and practical, approach continued unabated and came to a head over Autumn 1944/early 1945 in an exchange of DO letters between him and Portal. This period culminated in the bombing of Dresden, an event that has remained mired in controversy ever

since. Both of these factors – the exchange of letters and the Dresden bombing – should be considered further in assessing Harris's moral responsibility.

As 1944 progressed, Operation Overlord made its contribution to the success of the D-Day landings and the establishing of a foothold on mainland Europe. A directive on 14 September 1944 stated that control of the British and American strategic bomber forces in Europe had been restructured with control given to Portal and General Henry 'Hap' Arnold respectively. Despite this change the task remained consistent: 'The overall mission of the strategic air forces is the progressive destruction and dislocation of the German military, industrial and economic systems and the direct support of land and naval forces.'[72] Crucially, the directive applied to both Bomber Command and its American counterparts and undermines Grayling's[73] over-simplified differentiation of the two in their execution of bombing: 'When weather or tactical considerations are unsuitable for operations against specific primary objectives, attacks should be delivered upon important industrial areas by both Bomber Command R.A.R. and U.S.St.A.F.E. (using blind techniques as necessary).'[74] Although Bomber Command's night operations naturally lent themselves more obviously to blind area bombing, the tactic continued to be a mainstay of *both* air forces when conditions for the more precise bombing of specific targets was absent.

In his Foreword to Harris's *Despatch on War Operations* Cox assesses the number and types of attack made by Bomber Command in the year following the *Pointblank* Directive of June 1943, concluding: 'At least fifty percent of the targets had some direct connection to *Pointblank*'.[75] Cox's assessment is significant because it refutes suggestions that Harris flagrantly ignored or disobeyed orders concerning targeting, thereby reducing the charge against him to one of interpreting (as was his right) his directives in a manner more agreeable to his personal priorities: two very different propositions with two parallel degrees of moral culpability. Harris confirmed his personal inclination in his *Despatch* when he stated that by the second half of September 1944 it had become possible to 'resume the campaign against German industrial cities ... the return of Bomber Command to its proper strategic role'.[76] This re-prioritization had accompanied the transfer of operational control 'from the Supreme Allied Commander to the Chief of the Air Staff'.[77] The implication here being that CAS either supported or facilitated Harris's bombing emphasis in a way, or to a degree, that SAC had not.

The relationship between Harris and Portal, especially the degree to which Portal somehow 'let Harris get away with' ignoring both him and the orders he issued is undoubtedly significant in any attempt to assess the degree of moral responsibility both men bore in relationship to area bombing in general and, later, Dresden in particular.[78] Hastings asserts that Portal 'finally showed himself unable to exert authority over Sir Arthur Harris'.[79] In contrast, following a detailed analysis of the number of Bomber Command sorties flown, their targets, the weather during the period and the damage done to oil production, Cox concludes that 'Portal's attempts to persuade Harris ... were ultimately largely successful in achieving a greater weight of effort

on oil targets'.[80] Cox provides an analysis of the bombing statistics by target for the final three months of 1944 which leads him to the conclusion that Portal, at best given the multiple constraints in operation, could have forced Harris to an increase of a further 25% in oil targeting, from 14% to 18% overall: hardly a war-changing degree of difference.[81] While Cox's figures remain open to scrutiny it is unlikely that they could alter to a degree that would significantly shift the relative culpability of either Portal or Harris. All of that arguing would be overshadowed by what came next: Dresden.

On 25 January 1945 Churchill wrote to Archibald Sinclair, Secretary for Air: 'I did not ask you last night about plans for harrying the German retreat from Breslau. On the contrary I asked whether Berlin, and no doubt other large cities in East Germany, should now be considered especially attractive targets.'[82] Subsequently, a letter from Bottomley, Portal's deputy, on 27 January 1945 contained further instructions for Harris. According to Bottomley, Portal agreed that 'subject to the overriding claims of oil and the other approved target systems within the current directive, we should use available effort in one big attack on Berlin and related attacks on Dresden, Leipzig, Chemnitz or any other cities where a severe blitz will not only cause confusion in the evacuation from the East but will also hamper the movement of troops from the West'.[83] In addition, Harris would undertake these attacks, subject to the qualifications about oil and other priority attacks 'as soon as moon and weather conditions allow'.[84] According to Cox's description of events in the lead-up to the bombing of Dresden, 'What had started as a Churchillian prod had now become a prime ministerial demand for action'.[85] Over the next few days Bottomley and Portal worked to ensure these targets were confirmed and approved by a number of key figures:[86] 'the list of endorsements for the bombing of [Dresden], implicit or explicit, now ranged from the Prime Minister, down through the British Chiefs of Staff (including the CAS), the Chief of Staff of the US Army, the British Vice-Chiefs of Staff, the Deputy Supreme Commander, the Commander USSTAF, the JIC, and in the Air Ministry the DCAS and the Director of Bomber Operations'.[87] The number of individuals more senior to Harris in the chain of command who were not only privy to the information about Dresden as a potential target but who were complicit in approving it as such is impressive and undermines the credibility of any claim that Harris in some way chose and pursued Dresden as a target of his own volition.

At the same time as Harris was receiving his instructions Sinclair wrote to Churchill confirming that attacks would be made, circumstances permitting, on Berlin, Dresden, Leipzig and Chemnitz, the cities that had been specified to Harris. Sinclair also added: 'The use of night bomber forces offers the best prospects of *destroying these industrial cities* without detracting from our oil offensive targets.'[88] According to Taylor, this minute was acknowledged by Churchill on 28 January 1945 without comment.[89] With Portal referring to a 'severe blitz' causing confusion in the movements of civilians and soldiers in the East of Germany and Sinclair communicating with Churchill about 'destroying these industrial cities', the subsequent isolation of Harris and his moral scapegoating over Dresden was both cowardly and reprehensible on the part of those senior to him in the chain of command, up to and

including Churchill. Consistent with the moral hierarchy introduced earlier, leadership responsibility and moral culpability for Bomber Command's actions after 27 January 1945, especially the bombing of Dresden, is shared in descending order of importance by Churchill, the Air Ministry, Portal and the other Chiefs, Harris and his crews. However, the degree of culpability is dictated by the extent to which freedom of thought and action could be exercised, with Churchill having the greatest moral responsibility, the bomber crews the least. Harris is barely more culpable than his bomber crews who had no choice in the matter; his personal support for area bombing and the targeting of Dresden does not increase his moral responsibility because he had no authority with which to refuse the attack.

In the weeks that followed the attacks on Dresden (the Bomber Command attack and the two follow-up American attacks), public disquiet began to emerge, eventually prompting Churchill to issue his now infamous 28 March 1945 memorandum to General Ismay and the Chief of the Air Staff. In what reads like a clear attempt to shift responsibility he stated: 'It seems to me that the moment has come when the question of the bombing of German cities for the sake of increasing the terror, though under other pretexts, should be reviewed ... The destruction of Dresden remains a serious query against the conduct of Allied bombing'.[90] Harris's furious response would prompt a withdrawal of the memo and the issuing of a less provocative replacement on 1 April, where the reference to 'increasing terror, though under other pretexts' was dropped.[91] Hansen described this watershed as the point where 'Churchill-the-commander was giving way to Churchill-the-historian'.[92] Similarly, Hastings described this turn of events as Churchill's attempt to 'distance himself from the bombing of Dresden and the rising controversy surrounding area bombing'.[93] Adding another perspective is Oliver Haller who addresses Churchill's concerns as he looked forward to the difficulties of post-war re-industrialisation of Germany.[94] For Haller, Churchill was not motivated primarily from 'post-Dresden guilt' but from an understanding that 'the destruction of industrial assets needed for reconstruction or at least as part of a reparations settlement made no economic or humanitarian sense at all'.[95] While these assessments are convincing from a historical perspective, from a moral perspective Churchill's actions are more damning: they indicate a willingness on the part of Britain's great war-time leader to abdicate moral responsibility for acts that he co-authored and on whose authority they rested.

Harris's determination to publicly, almost aggressively, stand by the actions of his Command without apology or regret was, from a leadership perspective, no doubt a comfort and inspiration to the crews who had dropped the bombs. However, given the deafening silence of his superiors, through his obduracy Harris effectively marked himself out as the scapegoat upon whom, erroneously, the greater moral responsibility would publicly be weighed. While more astute military leaders and political figures followed Churchill's example (nobody in Harris's chain of command publicly echoed his trenchant endorsement of the area bombing of Dresden) Harris stood alone, defiant and destined to bear the moral culpability of his superiors.

Conclusion

Many of the arguments about Harris's policies towards the end of the war focus upon the relative success and strategic consequences of the targeting of oil infrastructure and the targeting of cities. Air power and other historians, as well as moral philosophers, will debate forever the merits of one over the other and the contributions to both made by Bomber Command. Historians have one major advantage in making their judgements of Harris who had to make terrible decisions with awful consequences in the heat of battle: the benefit of 20/20 hindsight and access to far more, and more accurate, information than he did. Furthermore, they (we) do so from the safety and security of political stability and seven decades of peace in Western Europe. If the morality of the actions of Harris and his bombers are to be judged in absolute terms then they will be forever guilty and their names will live on in ignominy. However, when Harris's actions are assessed comparatively, the outcome is somewhat different: the lesser evil prevailed over the greater evil, though there remained evil on both sides.

After the fact, the world had and retains a greater appreciation of the impact of the oil strategy but, in parallel, the world also has a greater appreciation of Hitler's Final Solution that has similarly to be weighed retrospectively: more than a million men, women and children were killed at Auschwitz alone. If Bomber Command reduced the length of the war by one day how many Jews were saved? What if Bomber Command reduced the length of the war by a week? By a month? Such a grotesque numbers game can never be accurately completed and it would seem perverse to even try. However, these numbers remind us that when great evil stalked Europe and Britain had to take the fight to its Nazi enemy, Harris more than anyone was prepared to embrace a lesser evil in order to defeat it. He never shirked from his task, never denied it, never apologised and never regretted his actions. Harris had blood on his hands and never tried to hide it, and it was this that singled him out as a scapegoat. Churchill wanted his legacy and many in the country wanted to forget what they had demanded of Harris in the darkest of hours when fear and danger were overwhelming.[96] It is time we remembered Harris's role and moral culpability in its proper perspective and recall him from the wilderness.

Notes

[1] New International Version.
[2] Jean Bethke Elshtain, *Just War Against Terror* (New York: Basic Books, 2004) p. 9.
[3] Charles Webster and Noble Frankland, *The Strategic Air Offensive Against Germany 1939-1945*, IV Vols. (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1961), hereafter SAOG.
[4] Sebastian Cox, 'Setting the Historical Agenda: Webster and Frankland and the Debate over the Strategic Bombing Offensive against Germany, 1939-1945', in Jeffrey Grey (Ed.) *The Last Word? Essays on Official History in the United States and British Commonwealth* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2003) pp. 147-173.
[5] The Hague Convention, 29 July 1899, Declaration IV.1, *To Prohibit, for the Term of Five Years, the Launching of Projectiles and Explosives from Balloons, and Other Methods of Similar Nature*, located

at http://www.icrc.org/ihl.nsf/INTRO?OpenView, accessed 10 October 2012.
[6] Lord Montagu of Beaulieu, House of Lords Debate, 16 March 1909, Vol 1, cc456-64, located at http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/lords/1909/mar/16/aerial-navigation, accessed 27 September 2012.
[7] Arthur Lee, House of Commons Debate on Military and Naval Aeronautics, 2 August 1909, Vol , cc1580-82, located at http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1909/aug/02/naval-and-military-aeronautics, accessed 27 September 2012.
[8] Arthur Lee, Ibid., cc. 1575-6.
[9] See also John Gooch, 'Attitudes to War in Late Victorian and Edwardian England', in *The Prospect of War* (London: Frank Cass, 1981) pp. 35-51.
[10] Tami Biddle Davis, *Rhetoric and Reality in Air Warfare: The Evolution of British and American Ideas About Strategic Bombing, 1914-1945* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2002) p. 11.
[11] See Ibid., Chapter 1, pp. 11-68.
[12] *Rules concerning the Control of Wireless Telegraphy in Time of War and Air Warfare*, drafted by a Commission of Jurists at the Hague, December 1922 - February 1923, located at http://www.icrc.org/ihl.nsf/FULL/275?OpenDocument, accessed 4 October 2012.
[13] Peter Gray, 'The Gloves Will Have To Come Off: A Reappraisal of the Legitimacy of the RAF Bomber Offensive Against Germany', *Air Power Review*, Vol. 13, No. 3 (Autumn/Winter 2010) p. 16. In this article Gray provides an detailed discussion of legal developments and moral arguments surrounding aerial bombing in the inter-war years. See also Peter Gray, *The Strategic Leadership and Direction of the Royal Air Force Strategic Air Offensive Against Germany From Inception to 1945*, PhD Thesis, University of Birmingham, 2009, pp. 196-203.
[14] For a recent, comprehensive summary of the attempts to secure international legal restrictions on the use of aerial bombardment, especially against civilians, see Gray's PhD Thesis, Ibid., Ch. 2. See also Michael Howard (Ed.) *Resraints on War: Studies in the Limitation of Armed Conflict* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979); M.W. Royse, *Aerial Bombardment and the International Regulation of Warfare* (New York: Harold Vinal, 1928).
[15] Basil Liddell Hart, *Paris or the Future of War* (London: E. P. Dutton and Co, 1925) p. 27.
[16] Hugh Trenchard, 2 May 1928, *Memorandum by the Chief of the Air Staff for the Chiefs of Staff Sub-Committee on The War Object of an Air Force*, in SAOG, Vol. IV, p. 72.
[17] Ibid., p. 73.
[18] Ibid.
[19] G.F. Milne, 16 May 1928, Ibid., p. 81.
[20] G.F. Milne, 16 May 1928, Ibid., p. 79.
[21] J.M. Spaight, *Air Power and the Cities* (London, New York & Toronto: Longmans, 1930) p. 227-8.
[22] J.M. Spaight, *Air Power and War Rights*, 2nd Edn. (London: Longmans, 1933) p. 259, cited in Gray, 'The Gloves Will Have To Come Off' p. 18.
[23] Gray, 'The Gloves Will Have To Come Off', p. 18.
[24] Spaight, *Air Power in the Next War*, p. 164.
[25] Ibid., p. 166.
[26] Ibid., p. 173.
[27] Frederick Taylor, *Dresden: Tuesday 13 February 1945* (London: Bloomsbury, 2005) p. 88.

[28] Winston Churchill, *The Second World War, Vol. II* (London: The Reprint Society, 1949) p. 567, cited in Bellamy, *Ethics of Terror Bombing*, p. 52.
[29] Directive, 13 April 1940, *SAOG, Vol. IV*: p. 109-10.
[30] Ibid.
[31] Winston Churchill, 20 August 1940, Statement to the House of Commons, transcript located at **https://www.winstonchurchill.org/learn/speeches/speeches-of-winston-churchill**, accessed 11 September 2012 (*Italics added*).
[32] Adolf Hitler, 4 September 1940, Speech at the Berlin Sportpalast, translated transcript located at **http://der-fuehrer.org/reden/english/40-09-04.htm**, accessed 11 September 2012.
[33] Ibid.
[34] *SAOG, Vol. IV*, 21 September 1940, p. 127.
[35] Ibid., 30 October 1940, p. 129.
[36] Ibid., 9 July 1941, p. 136.
[37] Ibid., 14 February 1942, p. 144.
[38] Arthur Harris, *Bomber Offensive* (London: Greenhill Books, 1998) p. 70.
[39] Ibid., p. 176.
[40] Ibid., p. 22-3.
[41] Henry Probert, *Bomber Harris: His Life and Times* (London: Greenhill Books, 2003) p. 104.
[42] Ibid.
[43] The Lindemann Memorandum, or Cherwell Report, reproduced in Max Hastings, *Bomber Command* (London: Michael Joseph Limited, 1979), pp. 127-128.
[44] Hastings, *Bomber Command*, p. 128.
[45] Biddle, *Rhetoric and Reality*, p. 262.
[46] Ibid., p. 200.
[47] *SAOG, Vol. IV*, 5 May 1942, p. 148 (*Italics added*).
[48] Ibid., 14 January 1943, p. 152.
[49] Ibid., 21 January 1943, p. 153.
[50] Jean Bethke Elshtain, 'Just War and Humanitarian Intervention', *Ideas*, Vol. 8, No. 2 (2001) p. 2.
[51] For further explication of just war criteria see Norman, R., *Ethics, Killing and War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995) p. 118. For similar summaries see Bellamy, A. J., *Just Wars: From Cicero to Iraq* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2006) p. 121–3; McMahan, J., 'Just Cause for War', *Ethics & International Affairs*, Volume 19, No. 3 (Fall 2005) p. 5; or Rengger, N., 'The Ethics of War: The Just War Tradition', in Bell, D., (Ed.) *Ethics and World Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010) pp. 296-298.
[52] *SAOG, Vol. IV*, 14 January 1943, p. 152.
[53] Michael Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars: A Moral Argument with Historical Illustrations*, (New York: Basic Books, 1977) pp. 251-255.
[54] Ibid. p. 253.
[55] Michael Walzer (2000) J*ust and Unjust Wars*, 3rd Edition (New York: Basic Books) pp. 61-2.
[56] Alex Bellamy, 'The Ethics of Terror Bombing: Beyond Supreme Emergency', *Journal of Military Ethics*, Vol. 7, No. 1, (2008) p. 60.
[57] For an extended and detailed discussion I recommend David Hall, 'Black, White and Grey:

Wartime Arguments for and against the Strategic Bomber Offensive', in *Canadian Military History*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (Winter 1998) pp. 7-19.

[58] Hall summarises the positions of Archbishops Cosmo Lang, William Temple and Geoffrey Fisher with regard to the bombing campaign against Germany as reluctant, 'yet with unwavering conviction ... a necessary evil in a far from perfect human world' (Ibid. p. 13). Dissenting from this position throughout the war was George Bell, Bishop of Chichester, who criticized strategic bombing in both Parliament and the Press, and Reverend John Collins: who both incited and encouraged individuals of high rank and low – including Parliamentarians – to oppose the bombing campaign (Ibid., p. 14).

[59] Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province, Rev. Edn., Benzinger Brothers, 1948 (Reprinted Westminster, MD: Christian Classics, 1981), II-II, Q. 64, A. 7, p. 1961.

[60] See Augustine, *Confessions and Enchiridion*, (397) Trans. Outler, A.C. (Grand Rapids, MI: Christian Classics Ethereal Library, 2000).

[61] Jean Bethke Elshtain, (Ed.) *Just War Theory* (New York and London: New York University Press, 1992) p. 4.

[62] For a full explication of the ontological basis of this argument see Peter Lee, *A Genealogy of the Ethical Subject in the Just War Tradition*, PhD Thesis Submitted to King's College London (May 2010) p. 103.

[63] Augustine, *City of God*, Trans. Henry Bettenson (London: Penguin Classics, 2003) I. 26, p. 37.

[64] See, for example, *The Queen's Regulations for the Royal Air Force, or Aide Memoire on the Law of Armed Conflict*, JSP 381, Revised February 2005, Ministry of Defence, located at **http://www.mod.uk/NR/rdonlyres/749088E6-E50A-470E-938D-459A74481E88/0/jsp381.pdf**.

[65] Peter Gray provides such an analysis in his PhD thesis (see Notes 13,14 above): 'The Interface between the Politicians, the Air Ministry and Bomber Command', p. 251ff.

[66] Winstion Churchill, *Second World War*, Vol. II, p.15, cited in Gray, Ibid., 2010, p. 254.

[67] Ibid., p. 255.

[68] For a brief summary of the specific agencies involved in the formulation of bombing policy see Sebastian Cox (Ed.), *The Strategic Air War Against Germany 1939-1945: Report of the British Bombing Survey Unit* (London and Portland, Or.: Frank Cass, 1998) p. 12.

[69] For detailed diagrams of the policy-making hierarchy see Ibid., Figures 1-3, following p. 12.

[70] *SAOG, Vol. IV*, 10 June 1943, p. 158-60.

[71] *SAOG, Vol. III*, p. 294.

[72] Directive, 14 September 1944, *SOAG, Vol. IV*, p. 171.

[73] Anthony Grayling, *Among The Dead Cities* (London: Bloomsbury, 2006, p. 266-9.

[74] Directive, 14 September 1944, *SOAG, Vol. IV*, p. 171.

[75] Sebastian Cox, Introduction to Sir Arthur T. Harris, *Despatch on War Operations: 23rd February 1942 to 8th May 1945* (London: Frank Cass, 1995) p. xx.

[76] Harris, *Despatch*, Para. 163, p. 30.

[77] Ibid.

[78] Critique of Harris's actions at this time can be found in Hastings, *Bomber Command*, pp. 328-36.

[79] Ibid., p. 328.

[80] Cox, Introduction to *Despatch on War Operations*, p. xxiii.
[81] Ibid., p. xxii.
[82] Winston Churchill, 25 January 1945, cited in Taylor, *Dresden*, p. 212.
[83] Norman Bottomley, 27 January 1945, Letter to Arthur Harris, *SAOG, Vol. IV*, p. 301.
[84] Ibid.
[85] Sebastian Cox, 'The Dresden Raids: Why and How?' in Paul Addison and Jeremy A. Crang (Eds.) *Firestorm: The Bombing of Dresden, 1945* (London: Pimlico, 2006) p. 25.
[86] Ibid., pp. 24-29.
[87] Ibid., p. 28.
[88] Sinclair, cited in Taylor, *Dresden*, p. 213 (*Italics added*).
[89] Ibid.
[90] Churchill memo to General Ismay and Chief of the Air Staff, 28 March 1945, in *SAOG, Vol. III*, p. 112.
[91] Randall Hansen, *Fire and Fury: The Allied Bombing of Germany, 1942-1945* (London: NAL Caliber, 2009) p. 272.
[92] Ibid., p. 271.
[93] Hastings, *Bomber Command*, p. 344.
[94] Oliver Haller, 'Destroying Hitler's Berghof: The Bomber Command Raid of 25 April 1945', in *Canadian Military History*, Vol. 20, No. 1 (Winter 2011) p. 6.
[95] Ibid.
[96] I exempt from this generalised comment all of those individuals who, even when Britain was at its lowest ebb, raised the morality question and were not deterred in asking it, even if their views were not popular.