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ISSN: 1195-8472 Print

ISSN: 1929-400X Online



Destroying Hitler's Berghof: The Bomber Command Raid of 25 April 1945

[Oliver
Haller](#)

Abstract

This paper examines the Royal Air Force raid on Adolf Hitler's Berghof on the Obersalzberg in April 1945. Arthur Harris, the head of Bomber Command, wanted to emphasize the air power's decisive role in the defeat of Nazism. However, Winston Churchill and Bernard Montgomery, among others, questioned the usefulness of destroying Berchtesgaden so late in the war. Unlike traditional explanations that focus on post-Dresden guilt, this article contends that British politicians grew increasingly concerned with the economic state of postwar Germany and the potential costs of the upcoming occupation. The continuation of area bombing at this late stage of the war reinforced the fears and consequences of "overkill." Harris's disconnect with postwar civil-military concerns negatively influenced the postwar image of Bomber Command.

Recommended Citation

Haller, Oliver (2011) "Destroying Hitler's Berghof: The Bomber Command Raid of 25 April 1945," *Canadian Military History*: Vol. 20 : Iss. 1 , Article 2.
Available at: <https://scholars.wlu.ca/cmh/vol20/iss1/2>

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