

“The belief that in the event of war the main role of the *Luftwaffe* would be the independent, and perhaps immediate, strategic bombing of Great Britain became widespread in Whitehall from the beginning of the *Luftwaffe*”<sup>1</sup> From early 1934 the DRC issued warnings about the threat that German aerial rearmament posed to Britain.<sup>2</sup> The first major response was a COS paper entitled: “The Potential Air Menace to this Country from Germany” The paper stated: “We know Germany wishes to rearm and believe she intends to build up an exceptionally strong airforce. *But we know little of her aims and intentions*”.<sup>3</sup> Then, after describing the high degree of peacetime preparations needed to sustain a strategic bombing campaign which could well result in front-line material losses of 100% per month, the COS argued that the air war would be most likely to start with an immediate offensive launched by Germany against Britain. It was calculated that if Germany possessed a fleet of 1230 bombers operating from the Low Countries she would be capable of dropping 150 tons of bombs per day on Britain.<sup>4</sup> The CAS believed that if Germany organised her aircraft industry properly, it would “be possible to sustain, more or less indefinitely, air attacks on this country”.<sup>5</sup> He was to state one month later, “there is a considerable school of thought in Germany today which believes that a ‘knock-out blow’ is possible, and seems to be inclined in favour that mode of attack”.<sup>6</sup> The Chancellor of the Exchequer, who was present when Hitler claimed parity with the RAF, shared such pessimism. He wrote to the PM saying “this country is seriously open to the threat of sudden attack by a Continental Power in a degree to which it has not been exposed

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<sup>1</sup> F.H. Hinsley, *et al.*, *British Intelligence in the Second World War: Its Influence on Strategy and Operations*: Volume I (London, 1979), pp.77-78

<sup>2</sup> DRC 7, 9 January 1934, and DRC 7th meeting (Minutes of), 25 January 1934, both CAB 16/109; CP64(34) “Imperial Defence Policy: The Report of the DRC”, 28 February 1934, CAB 16/110

<sup>3</sup> COS 341 “The Potential Air Menace to this Country from Germany”, 12 June 1934, CAB 53/24

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> COS 130th meeting, 27 June 1934, CAB 53/4

<sup>6</sup> COS 344 “Memo by CAS: Note on COS 341”, 11 July 1934, CAB 53/24

for hundreds of years”.<sup>7</sup> These fears of a ‘knock-out blow’ were repeated by the DRC in late 1935:

“Whatever the risk of a sudden air attack, the form it would take is infinitely more serious than it was before the war ... In 1914 the worst risk was considered to be an invasion ... *To this must be now added the risk of an air attack of great, possibly unknown strength* ... if successful it would fulfil the Teutonic conception of a short, sharp, war ... we do not see how it could be excluded from the range of possibilities”.<sup>8</sup>

A year later the COS reaffirmed this view when it said:

“We take the view that the most immediate menace to this country ... would arise if Germany were to concentrate her air striking force against us, and adopt unrestricted bombing as a method of warfare”.<sup>9</sup>

The four strategic appreciations written by the COS all further stated that Germany would aim for a ‘knock-out blow’.<sup>10</sup> These papers were merely ‘knitted together’ in the sense that each of the Services ‘worst case’ assumptions were listed one after the other, with no attempt to question them, nor to integrate them into a ‘grand strategy’.

Calculations on the numbers of bombs an enemy could drop in any air strike had begun in 1922. It was estimated that the French Air Force could drop 200 tons in the first twenty-four hours. Civil defence planners believed that there would 50 casualties (one-third fatalities) per ton.<sup>11</sup> These figures were deemed to be conservative estimates, despite the fact that there had been

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<sup>7</sup> Simon to MacDonald, 10 April 1935, C3087/55/18, FO 371/18835

<sup>8</sup> DRC 37 “Programmes of the Defence Services: Third Report: Volume I”, 21 November 1935, CAB 24/259, emphasis added

<sup>9</sup> COS 513 “Appreciation of the Situation in the event of War against Germany by the Joint Planning Sub-Committee”, 26 October 1936, CAB 53/29

<sup>10</sup> COS 401(JP), 2 October 1935, CAB 53/25; COS 513(JP), 26 October 1936, CAB 53/25; COS 698, 28 March 1938, CAB 53/37; COS 843, 20 February 1939, CAB 53/45

<sup>11</sup> T.H. O’Brien, *Civil Defence* (London, 1955)

no attempt to scientifically calculate them.<sup>12</sup> In May 1934 the Air Staff estimated that an air attack would last two to three weeks, with the daily bombload of 600 tons consisting of 75% high explosives, and 25% gas.<sup>13</sup> In 1937 the COS estimated that an average of 644 tons per day over the same period was a “reasonable estimate”.<sup>14</sup> The report further stated that by 1939 the *Luftwaffe* might have the potential capacity to drop 3500 tons in the first twenty-four hours of any strike. The Sub-Committee on the Reorientation of the Air Defence System of Great Britain said:

“in the absence of any practical experience of air warfare on a major scale under modern conditions to provide us with definite data susceptible to mathematical expression, we are unable to disagree with any of their conclusions”.

They estimated that this 600 ton payload would result in 200,000 casualties a week, of which 66,000 would be fatalities.<sup>15</sup> Just before the climax of the Czech Crisis, the Air Staff believed that the *Luftwaffe* could deliver 940 tons per day.<sup>16</sup>

“The apparent clarity and certainty with which these views were presented belies their *essentially speculative* nature ... The Air Staff possessed little evidence to substantiate its *assumptions*”.<sup>17</sup> These assumptions on the strategic orientation of the *Luftwaffe* were so ‘mirror imaged’ on the RAF that the Air Staff did not even bother to consult intelligence which was contradictory, and failed to investigate Germany's logistical and technological capabilities to undertake the campaign the RAF

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> “Air Staff Note on the Possible Distribution of German Air Attack”, May 1934, AIR 9/69

<sup>14</sup> COS 603 “Estimated Scale of Air Attack on England in the Event of War with Germany”, 20 July 1937, CAB 53/32

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.; Figures from O'Brien, *Civil Defence*, p.96

<sup>16</sup> “Possible Weight of German Air Attack on Great Britain at the Present Time”, 12 September 1938, AIR 9/90

<sup>17</sup> U. Bialer, *The Shadow of the Bomber: The Fear of Air Attack and British Politics* (London, 1980), p.132, emphasis added

feared.<sup>18</sup> What were these contradictory intelligence reports, and what technical intelligence could the Air Staff have used?

## Contradictory Intelligence

### (a) War Office Papers

The first WO paper to contradict Air Staff assumptions was written in November 1934. It acknowledged that Germany was doing much to become a formidable power.

“At first sight [it] might give the impression that German rearmament policy is mainly directed to the creation of a vast airforce ... All the evidence points on the contrary to German policy being directed to the creation of a balanced system, combining both a strong army and a strong airforce ... The German General Staff consider that the action of land and airforces must be complementary, and must be directed to the same objective. *They do not contemplate a separate air strategy*”.<sup>19</sup>

The WO had been aware of air-land exercises since 1930,<sup>20</sup> and its next WO paper, in early 1936, was even more explicit (and largely accurate) in its description of the strategy the *Luftwaffe* would follow. The report stated that although there was no official manual as of yet, articles in German military journals suggested that Germany would use her aircraft in the following tactical ways.<sup>21</sup>

Bombers were to be used to impede enemy concentrations in railways, airfields, and barracks; against concentrations in billets, at HQs and en route to battlefields; against camps, industrial areas, mines, and factories when operations had become static; and during battles against distant targets and

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<sup>18</sup> Hinsley, *British Intelligence*, p.78

<sup>19</sup> MI3 Memo “Notes on the Trend of German Rearmament”, 20 November 1934, WO 190/281, emphasis added

<sup>20</sup> MI3b Memo “German Ideas on Air Co-operation with Ground Troops”, 12 November 1930, WO 190/92

<sup>21</sup> MI3b Memo “German Army: Use of Aircraft in War”, 3 April 1936, WO 190/414

communications in rear areas. Fighter aircraft were to be employed against troops on the march; against transport columns; in back areas against batteries and reserves; in decisive areas against reserves, reinforcements, batteries, and anti-tank weaponry; against industry and artillery; against the main enemy force; and in pursuit of retreating columns and trucks.

In short, the 1936 paper argues that strategic bombing was only to be employed in operational support of the Army, whilst fighters were to be used almost purely on the battlefield. Two years later another WO paper emphasised that as well as pursuing a bombing campaign to help operations, the *Luftwaffe* was expected to co-operate with the Army on the battlefield.<sup>22</sup>

## (b) Other Intelligence Papers

In late 1934 the AA in Paris wrote: “It is believed [by the French] that no offensive will be launched immediately [on the outbreak of war], but that it will be used with progressive force to back political arguments and discussions which may arise”.<sup>23</sup> From the benefit of historical hindsight this remarkably accurate assessment of Germany's idea to use the *Luftwaffe* as a weapon of diplomacy appears not to have been acknowledged given the prevailing consensus of the ‘knock-out blow’.

In mid-1937 the French intelligence service sent their British counter-parts a report entitled, “Principles governing the Employment of the German Air Force”.<sup>24</sup> It was compiled from a report of large scale exercises and a “particularly reliable source”. The report stated that the essential task of the *Luftwaffe* was to attack the enemy’s vital resources, but that this must take place within the framework of general military operations, and consider the military, political and economic aspects to achieve “maximum total effect”.

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<sup>22</sup> MI3b Note “Air Support for the German Army”, May 1938, WO 190/626

<sup>23</sup> AA Paris Dispatch, 19 November 1934, C7802/31/18, CAB 21/417

<sup>24</sup> “Principles governing the Employment of the German Air Force”, 9 June 1937, CAB 104/32

Close collaboration with the Army, through designated units, was expected. The *Luftwaffe*'s three main tasks were: to fight the enemy airforce, attack vital resources, and to co-operate with the Army. Swinton argued that it closely resembled Air Staff ideas, though he did not say whether these were ideas on the *Luftwaffe*, or those the RAF should pursue.<sup>25</sup> Hankey said: "It contains nothing particularly unexpected, and indicates that the Germans would conduct air warfare on the same lines as we would"<sup>26</sup> Hankey was referring to a certain section which stated:

the [German] Supreme Command is in favour of the sudden launching of air operations at the beginning of hostilities," particularly a surprise attack to make the most of offensive capabilities.<sup>27</sup>

There is no available evidence to suggest that Hankey, or anyone else, was familiar with the ideas expressed in Wever's *Die Luftkriegführung*, of which this report, and the WO paper of 1936,<sup>28</sup> are very similar to, both in ideas on air-ground support, and the concept of a surprise attack against the enemy's forces, not his centres of population.

Towards the end of 1937 the Air Staff received further confirmation of the *Luftwaffe*'s orientation in an interview with the Chief of the German Air Staff, Stumpff. He said that it was not attractive to bomb cities. Not only would women and children die, but the important targets would not be hit, and "bombing a stubborn people might make them more stubborn and tenacious". The proper use of strategic bombers was to destroy individual targets. Stumpff claimed that the Spanish Civil War had been a better testing ground for fighters than for bombers.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Swinton Minute, 1 July 1937, *ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> Hankey to Baldwin, 7 July 1937, *ibid.*

<sup>27</sup> *Vide supra*, note 18

<sup>28</sup> *Vide supra*, note 14

<sup>29</sup> Record of Conversation between Lord Swinton (Secretary of State for Air) and General Stumpff (Chief of the German Air Staff), 22 October 1937, CAB 21/627

The AA Berlin, writing to the FO in February 1939, believed that the *Luftwaffe* was not designed to attack any particular opponent. Its organisation structure gave little indication of whom it intended to attack, and “rather conveys the impression that the aim has been to build up the strongest possible airforce in as short as time as possible”.<sup>30</sup>

### (c) The Joint Intelligence sub-Committee, 1936-1939

One of the JIC’s areas of investigation was air warfare in the Spanish Civil War, can it tell the historian anything about intelligence perceptions in this period?

The first intelligence paper on this subject was delivered in April 1937. It stated:

“Though this air warfare may not be intensive or as highly technical as that which may be visualised in a future war between first-class European powers, it is known that one nation [Germany] at least has used this opportunity for trying out modern war equipment”.

Information, it further stated, on air raids on Britain during the First World War “is not only scanty but also in some degree *very misleading* when applied to the important material and technological aspects of modern air war”.<sup>31</sup> Medhurst (DDI), probably in an attempt to warn against taking the image of Germany’s *Condor Legion* too far, said: “the true facts of air warfare in Spain were very difficult to ascertain” as observers’ opinions conflicted. He recommended that a detailed assessment list of all the factors in air warfare, from types employed to air raid precautions, be drawn up to aid analysis.<sup>32</sup> Goddard (AID), one month later told the JIC that the Air Ministry was trying to build up a library of information concerning the air war in Spain

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<sup>30</sup> AA Berlin to FO, 15 February 1939, C2325/11/18, FO 371/22950

<sup>31</sup> JIC-32 “Spain: Intelligence regarding Air Warfare” 22 April 1937, CAB 56/2, emphasis added

<sup>32</sup> JIC 8th meeting, 26 April 1937, CAB 56/1

as a source of reference. He reiterated the warning of the first paper (JIC-32) when he said that as air warfare was limited in Spain, the lessons learned could well be nil, as it was not conducted between first-class powers.<sup>33</sup>

Over one year later this seems to have been the view of the JIC. It was informed that the Spanish Civil War had yielded information of no real technical value, although it was pointed out that this gap in knowledge was not the result of any failure in the intelligence system. Admiral Buss said of the JIC's intelligence effort:

“It was open to doubt whether we should get real value from spending large amounts of money collecting intelligence”.<sup>34</sup>

No doubt he was expressing the view of many in the JIC who felt that, as the war was not between first-class powers, what intelligence was collected was not worth the effort of analysis because it could not be transferred outside the realms of the conflict. The last report of the JIC on air warfare in Spain noted:

“the air effort of each combatant was devoted directly or indirectly to the support of the land forces. No part of it was directed primarily against the national economy of the opponent”.

Any disruption of morale that occurred through bombing raids was “local and incidental”.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> JIC 9th meeting, 26 May 1937, CAB 56/1; COS 220, 22 October 1937, CAB 53/8

<sup>34</sup> JIC 18th meeting, 8 July 1938, *ibid.*

<sup>35</sup> JIC(A) 10, March 1939, CAB 56/6; Hinsley, *British Intelligence*, p.37

## Technical and Specialised Sources of Intelligence

### (a) The Government Code and Cipher School

What role, if any, did the GC&CS play in the intelligence perceptions of the *Luftwaffe*? As historians know that it was financially dependent upon what was left over from the SIS' meagre annual budget, it is a very plausible hypothesis that this severe shortage of money did much to restrict the GC&CS' workload capacity, both in terms of equipment and an efficient structure.<sup>36</sup> Nevertheless the historian is able to glean some ideas about the GC&CS from what fragmentary scraps of information exist, as, similar to the archival nature of SIS records, the peacetime activities of the GC&CS are still considered secret.

Nigel West writes that there was no *Luftwaffe* (radio) traffic of any significance up to 1936,<sup>37</sup> which is confirmed by a recently published manuscript by the first head of the GC&CS, A.G. Denniston. He claimed that the organisation did not see any traffic from the *Luftwaffe* until 1937.<sup>38</sup> The GC&CS was hampered by the fact that its 'listening posts' were not close enough to Germany to receive any of the important military traffic sent on low powered transmitters. What was received, as is claimed in the Official History of British Intelligence, was not usually important enough to be sent on to any of the services.<sup>39</sup> The GC&CS was particularly constrained by the fact that the Germans were particularly security conscious when transmitting information. Their codes were extremely difficult to penetrate, the diplomatic codes were unreadable for the whole interwar period. The German *Enigma* machine was so efficiently used (and constantly modified) that even by 1937 the GC&CS' failure to find its secrets was, as Hinsley relates, "becoming

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<sup>36</sup> Hinsley, *British Intelligence*, p.51

<sup>37</sup> N. West, *GCHQ: The Secret Wireless War, 1900-1986* (London, 1986), p.93

<sup>38</sup> A.G. Denniston, "The Government Code and Cipher School between the Wars", *Intelligence and National Security* (January-i), Volume 1, 1986, p.62

<sup>39</sup> Hinsley, *British Intelligence*, p.52

acute”.<sup>40</sup> The work of the GC&CS was not helped by the fact that up to 1937 there were simply not enough fully formed and active squadrons in the *Luftwaffe* to generate enough traffic. The GC&CS was able to read, from 1935, low-grade traffic which helped it identify the strength and location of bomber squadrons, but it was of no use in helping to accurately predict the future growth of the *Luftwaffe*. Its main use was as a very accurate source of intelligence when others were contradictory or fragmented.<sup>41</sup> A major problem was that the Air Staff or the AID did not ask the GC&CS to look for certain types of traffic. As Hinsley states, there was some *Luftwaffe* traffic from training exercises to suggest that it would not be employed in any ‘knock-out blow’ nor any major strategic bombing operations, but it appears not to have been acknowledged by the GC&CS, nor asked for by the AID.<sup>42</sup>

It has to be remembered that until 1935 the Air Ministry did not have its own section within the GC&CS. It also did not possess any signals intelligence experts of its own, and was forced to ‘import’ staff from the GC&CS into the Ministry.<sup>43</sup>

“Despite the growing effort applied at the GC&CS to military work after 1936, so little attention was devoted to the German problem<sup>44</sup> ... In the air sub-section the communications of the *Luftwaffe* were being studied by only a handful of people”.<sup>45</sup>

This lack of effort to concentrate upon Germany, as the GC&CS was mostly concerned with the traffic generated by the Soviet Union, Japan, and

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid., pp.53, 54

<sup>41</sup> Hinsley, *British Intelligence*, p.53

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., p.79

<sup>43</sup> Denniston, “The Government Code and Cipher School”, loc.cit.; Hinsley, *British Intelligence*, pp.22-23; J. Ferris, “Whitehall’s Black Chamber: The Government Code and Cipher School, 1919-1929”, *Intelligence and National Security* (January-i), Volume 2, 1987, pp.63, 67; C. Andrew, *Secret Service: The Making of the British Intelligence Community*, (London, 1985), p.484

<sup>44</sup> Hinsley, *British Intelligence*, p.54; Ferris, “Whitehall’s Black Chamber”, p.64

<sup>45</sup> Hinsley, *British Intelligence*, p.55

the Spanish Civil War,<sup>46</sup> meant that the vast majority of Germany's military traffic was not being intercepted (as it was increasingly possible), and that which was intercepted was not being studied closely enough.<sup>47</sup> Evidence of the tardiness with which signals intelligence upon the *Luftwaffe* was obtained by the Air Ministry (due to these obvious shortcomings) is related by Denniston. He states that traffic generated by the *Luftwaffe* was only fully read by GC&CS within the first five months of the outbreak of war after much Anglo-French-Polish collaboration during 1938 and 1939.<sup>48</sup>

## (b) Photo-reconnaissance

As "Photographic reconnaissance is an element of air warfare whose necessity seems so self-evident ... it is hard to grasp the initial difficulties which it had to overcome".<sup>49</sup> Trenchard, the first Marshal of the RAF, recognised, in 1919, that it was one of the primary necessities of war in view of the importance it had played on the Western Front. Yet in the period of the 'Ten Year Rule' when the RAF was seriously underfunded in all aspects of her operations, the branch of photo-reconnaissance suffered from "an absence of backing and direction at a high level".<sup>50</sup> This was compounded by the fact that the functions of taking and interpreting the photographs were divided between the RAF and the Army respectively, which included areas of interest solely for the RAF. This situation did not end until 1938, when the RAF unilaterally announced its intention that it would have the sole right to take and interpret the photographs for all three Services.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> West, *GCHQ: The Secret Wireless War*, p.95

<sup>47</sup> Hinsley, *British Intelligence*, pp.51, 54

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> J. Terraine, *The Right of the Line: The Royal Air Force in the European War, 1939-1945* (Sevenoaks, 1987), p.269

<sup>50</sup> Air Historical Branch Monograph, *Photographic Reconnaissance*, Volume I, Chapter 3, AIR 41/6

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

What is even more surprising to the historian, in view of the threat perceptions of the *Luftwaffe* in the 1930s, is that photo-reconnaissance, as a means of collecting intelligence, was only 'reactivated' in 1935 in response to the Abyssinian Crisis.<sup>52</sup> This revival brought two important points to the attention of the RAF. Firstly, that photo-reconnaissance was a good source of intelligence. Secondly, that the RAF did not possess the organisation nor the personnel to "extract intelligence from the photographs ... taken by its own squadrons". The official history comments that the standards "left much to be desired".<sup>53</sup> The Photographic Reconnaissance Directorate of Training was only created in 1937 after ACM Steel complained to the Secretary of State for Air, in October 1936, about the lack of any organisation, let alone policy. By late 1937 photo-reconnaissance was deemed to be much more important, albeit in the nature of an enemy war-effort. The training of photographic interpreters only began in early 1938.<sup>54</sup>

It was even later in the day when direct vertical photo-reconnaissance of Germany began. Liaison with the French intelligence services had led Winterbotham, the SIS' liaison officer in the AID, to consider using this method for British needs. It was November 1938 before any agents were recruited or any planes were chartered. The first trips were held from 30 March to 9 April 1939, with the second (and final) trips held in late July to early August of that year.<sup>55</sup> No doubt the SIS suffered from a lack of money to make such trips more frequently, but this is no more than a hypothesis as the SIS records are closed, and the AHB official history says little. Yet it is perhaps a fair argument to advance that the SIS was hampered by many of the problems that the Air Ministry faced: lack of specialised aircraft, specialised

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid., Chapter 4; Andrew, *Secret Service*, p.485

<sup>53</sup> Air Historical Branch, Chapter 5; Hinsley, *British Intelligence*, p.27

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.; See Buss to DCAS (Minute 13), 3 January 1938; Magg to McCombe (Treasury), 6 January, 1938; Evans to Treasury, 2 March 1938; Magg to Treasury, 2 March 1938, all AIR 2/1688

<sup>55</sup> Air Historical Branch, Chapter 4; Hinsley, *British Intelligence*, pp.28-29

cameras, specialised developing apparatus, and specialised staff for interpretation.<sup>56</sup>

The attempts to re-establish photo-reconnaissance as a means of intelligence gathering in the pre-war period was too little, too late. It appears that no-one had thought that it could be employed as a means of counting the number of aircraft maintained by the *Luftwaffe* at its airfields. Photo-reconnaissance was primarily thought as a means of checking the success of bombing raids by Bomber Command upon an enemy economy, and for identifying targets for wartime bombing before war broke out, but it was, in fact, the IIC that had done most to identify the bottle-necks in the German economy open to aerial attack. The AHB official history has critically commented that “air photography [before the war] had remained a mere matter of routine, *to which lip service was paid in official papers, but about which little was done*”.<sup>57</sup>

### (c) Technical Studies

In the early stages of German rearmament the COS asked the Air Staff to prepare reports about Germany’s ability to bomb Britain, particularly Germany’s ability to sustain attacks.<sup>58</sup> This appears not to have been done as “feasibility was neither examined nor questioned”.<sup>59</sup> The Air Staff made no attempt to examine the endurance of German bombers and their payload capacity. Ignorance of capability was admitted,<sup>60</sup> yet it did not prevent the Air Staff from producing papers as to what tonnage of bombs Germany could deliver. Similarly there was no investigation into Germany's ability to

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<sup>56</sup> Terraine, *The Right of the Line*, p.270; Hinsley, *British Intelligence*, p.27

<sup>57</sup> Air Historical Branch, Chapter 5, emphasis added; Hinsley, *British Intelligence*, p.26

<sup>58</sup> COS 130th meeting, 27 June 1934, CAB 53/4

<sup>59</sup> Hinsley, *British Intelligence*, p.78

<sup>60</sup> “Possible Weight of German Air Attack on Great Britain at the Present Time”, 12 September 1938, AIR 9/90; CP218(38) "Relative Air Strengths and Proposals for the Improvement of this Country's Position," October 1938, AIR 8/250

manufacture bombs, nor her capacity to store them. The Air Staff did not even bother to look for the immense superstructure of aerodromes, hangars and logistical support that a 'knock-out' fleet would need in North-western Germany for any such campaign against Britain.<sup>61</sup> Suffice to say, the Air Staff did not even begin to work out how the RAF would be able to mount and sustain a similar offensive until 1937.<sup>62</sup>

Yet it appears that there was a dissenter inside the AID who disagreed with the prevailing opinion. Hinsley argues, on the basis of retained documents in the AHB archives, that Goddard (DDI3) believed that the *Luftwaffe* would be used for ground air-support.<sup>63</sup> A paper his section produced argued that Keitel, who was C-in-C of the *Wehrmacht*, had a soldier's conception of airpower. Therefore, the *Luftwaffe* would be used to support the Army, not to apply Göring's 'knock-out blow'.<sup>64</sup> Goddard was also a member of the JIC which had emphasised the aspect of air-ground co-operation in the Spanish Civil War, but "these reports, being tentative, had little impact on military thinking, and they were not actively contested".<sup>65</sup> The AID appears not to have made use of his views nor of his sources.<sup>66</sup>

Unfortunately, this is only a tantalising glimpse of a difference of opinion. As "the Air Ministry was [so] dominated by the doctrine of the strategic deterrent, and because intelligence was subordinated to operations and planning, intelligence which did not conform to the dominant doctrine was excluded".<sup>67</sup> It appears that it was never asked for.

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<sup>61</sup> Hinsley, *British Intelligence*, p.79

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, p.78

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>64</sup> AI3 Summary, 24 August 1938, AIR 9/90

<sup>65</sup> D.C. Watt, "British Intelligence and the Coming of the Second World War in Europe", in E. May (ed.), *Knowing One's Enemies: Intelligence Assessments before the Two World Wars* (Princeton, N.J., 1984), p.265; Hinsley, *British Intelligence*, p.37

<sup>66</sup> Hinsley, *British Intelligence*, p.79

<sup>67</sup> Watt, "British Intelligence", p.267