

*Stewart Conn*

## Bedtime Story

“I don’t like that one, Hansel  
And Gretel, I told them so, little  
Children enticed by a wicked witch  
Into her marzipan cottage—such  
Goings-on—too fearsome  
For words, just before bedtime  
Too: keep them up half the night.”

They recognise her plight,  
Interpret it differently:  
*Grandma would be upset, you see*  
They confide later, out of tact,  
*It’s the old woman who is cooked!*

*Peter Redgrove*

## Goods-Trains, Bads-Trains

Twenty-nine iron wagons full of clean stone.  
The Railway is a beautiful metal  
Staffed by sincere men  
Who wear their uniforms handsomely.  
The seamed face of the driver is a map  
With the railways clearly marked.  
His assistant has his grasp on the throttle.  
The clean stone is going to be shaved  
Into facings for nurseries, for swimming-baths,  
Or some disinterested sculptor has ordered it  
To enter, chiselling out his life’s work.  
There are no partings on this railway,  
Only deliveries and meetings.  
But when we are all met together  
There must be another railway that takes us apart:  
Lichened freight, that is already written with dates,  
Insincere uniforms, with rucked seams, a driver  
With longer experience whose face-bone shows no map,  
The rail-irons a clanging skeleton over all England.

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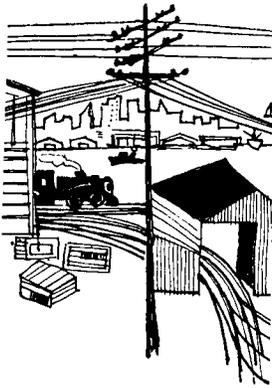
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## NOTES & TOPICS

### Zuckerman's Bomb

# World War II Strategy

By Charles P. Kindleberger



LORD ZUCKERMAN'S autobiography, *From Apes to Warlords*,<sup>1</sup> consists in large measure of a defence of the Bombing Strategy he advocated in World War II, and an attack on those who differed from it at the time and afterward. As one who is mentioned in opposition, more than once, it may be

appropriate to present one of the alternative strategies and its rationalisation with a little more sympathetic understanding than Lord Zuckerman, naturally enough, is able to muster. In particular, it may be helpful for the historical record to note some of the inconsistencies in the Zuckerman *plaidoyer*.

The discussion is limited to what I know, the debate over how best to bombard France from the air so as to support the *Overlord* operation of effecting a solid landing on the Continent. This is not the only issue addressed in the book. Bomber Command of the Royal Air Force wanted to defeat Germany by itself, i.e. without the necessity of invasion. The United States Air Forces, in their turn, were committed to the landing, but were interested in minimising tactical support in favour of the strategic mission of destroying the German economy. Part of the Zuckerman case, especially in the bombing of Germany, is strategic rather than tactical: it involves a choice

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between the bombardment of synthetic oil as a system as against German transportation for economic reasons. In fact toward the end of the campaign Zuckerman reverts from tactical to strategic bombing, insisting on transportation targets deep in Germany rather than those west of the Rhine in close support of 12th and 21st Army Groups.

The autobiography is in many ways a fascinating document, recounting in detail Solly Zuckerman's rise to scientific distinction at an early age; his impressive accomplishments for the Ministry of Home Security in the analysis of the effects of German bombing on the human body; and his association with the scientific, military, and to some extent literary great and near-great, not without abundant name-dropping and first-naming. In discussion of the tactics for bombing in support of the cross-channel landing, Zuckerman tries to make a distinction between the empirical, scientific case which he represents and the *a priori*, unsupported case of the economists. (It should be noted that the economists' position in many respects was developed by military figures, especially Air Commodore Sidney Bufton of the Air Ministry and Colonel Richard d'Oyly Hughes, of the United States Strategic Air Force (USSTAF) in Europe, commanded by General Spaatz.)

THE AMERICAN ECONOMISTS belonged to a little group called the "Enemy Objectives Unit" in the Economic Warfare Division of the Embassy, working with a group in the British Ministry of Economic Warfare headed by Oliver Lawrence. We were on detached duty from the Office of Strategic Services and the Board of Economic Warfare (and included an impressive number of economists of whom the best known, later, were Carl Kaysen, and Walt W. Rostow, both of whom at different times coordinated economic policy in the White House). We started out by developing a theory of strategic bombardment for use by USSTAF, committed to daylight pinpoint bombing of target systems which would reduce the capacity of German ground forces to resist an Allied invasion. Area bombing of cities to affect morale, or bombing of fundamental economic systems like transport or electricity generation were rejected as too far behind the fighting front to affect the outcome of the invasion. German fighter aircraft production and ball-bearings were chosen as systems designed to make the German *Luftwaffe* defend in the air. In the event, no interruption developed to output

<sup>1</sup> *From Apes to Warlords*. By SOLLY ZUCKERMAN. Hamish Hamilton, £7.95.