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Matthew Anthony Evangelista

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Myron Taylor and the Bombing of Rome: The Limits of Law and Diplomacy

Matthew Anthony Evangelista

Department of Government, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, USA

ABSTRACT

Myron Taylor, President Franklin Roosevelt's personal representative to Pope Pius XII, carried out a difficult and ultimately futile mission during the Second World War: to persuade the Allies to spare Rome and the Vatican from aerial bombardment. Taylor was a Cornell law graduate and prominent industrial leader, enjoying Roosevelt's confidence and well respected by Vatican officials, including Eugenio Pacelli, whom he had met before the latter assumed his position as pope. Yet Taylor's attempts to prevent the bombing of Rome ran counter to prevailing military strategy and ideas about the legality, morality, and efficacy of targeting civilians. Taylor nevertheless pressed his ideas on American and British leaders, offering alternatives like declaring Rome an 'open city' and targeting hydroelectric plants instead of cities to disrupt the Italian war effort. He conveyed the pope's entreaties, often including thinly veiled threats to rouse worldwide Catholic opinion against the Allies were Rome harmed. This analysis tells the story of a failed but historically important effort to preserve Rome and its citizens from aerial destruction.

On 22 December 1939, President Franklin Roosevelt telephoned Myron Taylor, a retired business magnate and graduate of Cornell Law School, to offer him a position as his Personal Representative to the Pope.[1] The role of 'personal representative' was familiar to Taylor, who served on the Intergovernmental Committee on Political Refugees through which he came to know various Vatican officials. In fact, in 1936, Cardinal Eugenio Pacelli, the Vatican secretary of state, was a guest in Taylor's New York home. Three years later, on 2 March 1939, Pacelli became Pope Pius XII. Amongst Taylor's primary goals during the Second World War was to prevent Allied air attacks against Italy and spare Rome from aerial bombardment. Although seemingly well suited to convincing Roosevelt to spare Rome – a goal the president's representative personally favoured – Taylor's mission remained unsuccessful. American and British air forces bombed Italy, including its capital, throughout the war, with a cumulative death toll of over 60,000 civilians, two-thirds killed after the armistice of 8 September 1943, when Italy withdrew from the war.[2] Yet Taylor's efforts, however

CONTACT Matthew Anthony Evangelista mae10@cornell.edu Department of Government, Cornell University, 320 White Hall, Ithaca, NY 14853-4601

fruitless, sheds light on then-prevailing views about the legality and morality of harming civilians in war, many of which have evolved since then, and the limits of personal diplomacy in the face of perceived military exigencies – an issue more resistant to change.

There is a rich historical literature on the Allied bombing campaigns against Germany and Japan during the Second World War and the development of strategies of airpower. Much of it focusses on the legality and morality of the bombing, especially harm caused to civilians, as well as its effectiveness in contributing to victory.[3] Only recently, however, have scholars writing in English turned their attention to cases where the Allies bombed co-belligerents of Nazi Germany, such as Bulgaria, countries occupied by the Germans, such as France, or the example that fell into both categories: Italy.[4] Lack of attention to the Italian case is particularly surprising given that 'Italy was bombed for only a month less than Germany during the Second World War' and 'as many Italians were killed by bombing as died in the Blitz on Britain; more tons were dropped on Rome than on all British cities put together'.[5] Less surprising is that Italian historians have devoted considerable attention to the bombs that wrought such damage on their country; indeed, nearly every city bombed – circa 60 – boasts some combination of an extensively documented study of the consequences, first-hand accounts drawn from contemporary diaries, or websites that maintain lists of places hit and people killed.[6]

This study of the attempt to spare Rome from bombing speaks to larger issues related to aerial bombardment today, an age when 'humanitarian intervention' to prevent abuses of human rights frequently entails military means and primarily bombing. Cases such as Bosnia, Serbia, Libya, and Syria come to mind. What legal and ethical obligations do the interveners owe the civilians? Many of them, after all, are the unwilling subjects of dictatorial regimes that embarked on war in the face of public ambivalence, if not opposition. These are the sorts of questions Taylor faced as he summoned his – limited – knowledge of international law, his own moral impulses, and his familiarity with Italy to offer creative, if ultimately futile, diplomatic and military alternatives to bombing Rome. Although much has changed, especially in the legal understanding and technical possibilities of air warfare, many of Taylor's insights endure despite the failure of his mission.

Why would the Allies want to bomb Rome? One answer is that before the Second World War, both the United States and Britain had developed doctrines favouring the use of airpower against cities – doctrines that an Italian strategist, Giulio Douhet, pioneered in the 1920s. Moreover, from autumn 1940, Britain was already attacking other Italian cities; and Nazi Germany, Italy's ally, was bombing London with the enthusiastic endorsement of Benito Mussolini, the Italian dictator. Why spare Rome?

Before 1939, the bombing of cities was rare, owing partly to technological limitations and partly to legal and ethical restraints on deliberately targeting

civilians. In 1923, the major Powers negotiated a draft treaty at The Hague regulating air warfare by forbidding 'aerial bombardment for the purpose of terrorizing the civilian population', damaging private property, injuring non-combatants, and restricting attacks to specific military objectives.[7] By providing an exhaustive list of military targets considered permissible, the proposed treaty supplemented the provisions of the 1907 Hague Convention that generally forbade bombing of undefended cities and indicated objects that should be immune from attack.[8]

Although never implemented, the draft treaty reflected the basic understanding of international legal restrictions on air warfare in that era.[9] At the outbreak of the Second World War, for example, Roosevelt invoked both the legal prohibition of the Hague Convention and the broader moral principle of civilian immunity when he addressed

> an urgent appeal to every government which may be engaged in hostilities publicly to affirm its determination that its armed forces shall in no event and in no circumstances, undertake the bombardment from the air of civilian populations or of unfortified cities.[10]

The 'unfortified' nature of a population centre became relevant when Taylor and his Vatican interlocutors sought to have Rome declared an 'open city' to spare it from Allied bombs.

The prevailing legal and ethical restraints on air attack account for the shock of the German bombing of Guernica in April 1937 on behalf of fascist rebels during the Spanish Civil War. At the same time, however, a contrary position on the merits and morality of bombing had developed since the 1920s – although it defied the legal consensus. It portrayed the threat of destruction of cities as an effective deterrent to war and the deliberate terrorising of civilians as the most efficient way to end a war quickly if it broke out. Amongst the most famous theorists of airpower taking this position was Douhet, whose 1921 treatise, *Il dominio del'aria*, was widely translated and read, and whose counterparts Hugh Trenchard in Britain and Billy Mitchell in the United States espoused similar views.[11]

Bombing to undermine civilian morale in a belligerent country became a key feature of Prime Minister Winston Churchill's strategy during the Second World War. Britain entered the war in response to the German invasion of Poland in September 1939, which included air attacks against Warsaw. The British government and populace expected an immediate German air offensive against London – consistent with the interwar air theorists' advocacy of an early knockout blow against civilians – but they had to wait. The Germans instead focused their airpower on supporting the *Wehrmacht* ground offensive. German military successes finally convinced a wavering Mussolini – his people wary of the Germans and hopeful of avoiding the war – to declare war against France and Britain on 10 June 1940.[12] The British responded the next day with night-time raids from bases in Britain and southern France against Turin, Genoa, and Milan.[13] Particularly

damaging from a military standpoint were British attacks against Italian air resources.[14] Eventually Italy joined the German air offensive during the Battle of Britain in August 1940. No more than 170 Italian planes flew – five percent of the Axis total – but they never made it to London despite Mussolini and Churchill's claims to the contrary.[15]

Political scientists have made the useful distinction between 'punishment' strategies of bombing to undermine civilian morale and 'denial' strategies targeting military objectives to affect the outcome of armed conflict directly.[16] British strategy seemed to combine both motives: attacking industrial facilities and railroad junctions in heavily populated neighbourhoods, for example, could materially affect military operations and simultaneously shatter morale by killing, wounding, and rendering homeless ordinary citizens. Anticipating war with Italy, the British Air Staff had begun planning air operations during spring 1940 with this strategy in mind: undermining civilian morale by attacking ostensibly legitimate military targets. Bombing military-industrial facilities, including aircraft factories, would simultaneously appear legally justified and cause widespread harm to civilians living near them – for example, Fiat in Turin, Breda in Milan, Piaggio in Genoa.[17] Not for the last time, the Allies would deliberately hurt the segment of the population already most antagonistic to the Fascist regime – industrial workers of communist and anarchist sympathies – to convince them to overthrow it.

On the night of 12 June 1940, Rome experienced its first air raid alarms with propaganda leaflets rather than bombs dropped from British planes. Later leaflet drops offering southern Italian citizens a choice – 'Mussolini or bombs?' – were followed by attacks against the ports of Naples and Taranto.[18] On 6 November, British Air Marshal Philip Joubert declared that the Royal Air Force [RAF] 'certainly shall attack Rome as and when it suits us'.[19] A more explicit threat came in April 1941 – London promised a 'systematic bombing' of Rome if Axis forces bombed Cairo or Athens.[20] On 24 August, a BBC broadcast monitored by the Vatican conveyed the views of a British air marshal that 'Bomber Command held no false sentiment about the bombing of Rome'.[21] Convinced of having no chance to influence British official views directly, in September 1941 the pope sought to engage the United States – still two months away from joining the war after the Pearl Harbour attack – to preserve Rome from aerial destruction. He took advantage of the first visit of Roosevelt's personal representative to the Vatican on 10 September.

Taylor was an atypical diplomat. After graduating from Cornell with a law degree in 1894, he practiced for five years in his hometown of Lyons, New York, before moving to Wall Street. He soon began pursuing business instead of law. Taking an interest in the textile industry, he quickly made a fortune producing mail pouches for the postal service – and he invented the clear plastic return-address windows on envelopes. Pondering early retirement by

the mid-1920s, Taylor instead accepted an invitation to join the board of United States Steel [USS]. There, as chair of the finance committee, he eliminated much of the company's 400 USD million debt, just in time for the onset of the Great Depression. Later, as chief executive officer, he implemented an innovative share-the-work programme that maintained USS's workforce by continuing to pay workers their regular hourly wages, but reducing their hours as the firm operated at only 17 percent of capacity during the worst of the economic crisis. Although initially unsympathetic to organised labour, Taylor made headlines when he met with John L. Lewis, the American trade union leader, in 1937 and agreed to let the union represent workers at USS – the first major American corporation to do so. Although never an ardent New Dealer, Taylor was a registered Democrat and had run unsuccessfully for elected office on a couple of occasions.[22] His negotiating skills and foreign travel experiences made him a suitable choice as the president's personal representative.

Certain personal attributes hindered Taylor's work as a diplomat, whist others helped. He was not always in good health, and illness contributed to another limitation: how much time he could spend in Italy. His longest stay was his first – February to August 1940 – followed by six subsequent shorter visits, some as brief as a week or two. Taylor spent the momentous period following Italy's entry into the war in June 1940 in a Rome medical clinic recovering from his second gallstone operation in a year. A visit in September 1942 preceded a period of intense bombing of Italy's northern industrial cities. Mussolini's government subsequently barred Taylor from visiting Italy, and he was unable to return until June 1944.[23] Taylor carried out much of his diplomatic work from the Saranac Lake resort in the Adirondacks, the Mayflower Hotel in Washington, DC, and his home in Palm Beach, Florida. Taylor's religion was advantageous. Born into a Quaker family, he became an Episcopalian, like the president. Given the controversy his appointment occasioned, that was probably a good thing. Had Taylor been Roman Catholic, opposition would have been intense.[24] As *Time* magazine recounted in June 1940, Taylor's appointment was already prompting criticism from 'Methodists, Presbyterians, Lutherans, Baptists and Seventh Day Adventists' who viewed official United States representation to the leader of a – rival – religion as encroaching on the separation of church and state.[25]

Taylor's knowledge of Italy was not extensive, but he visited from time to time and owned a villa near Florence.[26] Fortunately, Taylor the diplomat received considerable assistance from an experienced career Foreign Service officer, Harold H. Tittmann, Jr. Posted to the Embassy in Rome in 1925, Tittmann remained for 11 years and became a prominent expert on Fascist Italy. Appointed consul general in Geneva in August 1939, Tittmann did double duty as part-time personal assistant to Taylor in Rome starting in

February 1940. At the end of that year, Tittmann transferred to Rome full-time, first as counsellor at the Embassy and, on Taylor's mission, *chargé d'affaires* in Vatican City, where he and his family spent the next two and one-half years.[27] Tittmann worked closely with Francis D'Arcy Godolphin Osborne, the British minister to the Holy See since 1936. When Italy declared war on Britain in June 1940, Osborne relocated from his lodgings in Rome to Vatican City for the duration of the conflict.

Another advantage Taylor enjoyed was his relationship with Roosevelt. Tittmann described how 'Taylor would constantly emphasize the unusual and unofficial aspects of his position, letting it be known that all his reports were addressed directly to the President outside official government channels'.[28] Taylor was on good terms with the Apostolic Delegate, the Vatican's representative in the United States, Archbishop Amleto Giovanni Cicognani, and with Cardinal Luigi Maglione, the Vatican secretary of state, to whom Cicognani reported. Roosevelt had met Pacelli during the same visit in 1936 when Taylor hosted him at his home. Pacelli dined with Roosevelt at Hyde Park, and thereafter the president often referred to him as 'his old and good friend', even after Pacelli had become pope – a rather unusual practice in Vatican diplomacy.[29] In any event, personal circumstances seemed auspicious for the sort of back-channel relationship Roosevelt favoured.

If results define successful diplomacy, Taylor failed – not least because of the daunting tasks he was assigned. They included urging Pius to use his influence to dissuade Mussolini from joining the war with Nazi Germany and remain neutral. Later, he requested papal endorsement of American military aid to the Soviet Union following Germany's invasion of June 1941, despite his predecessor's 1937 encyclical, *Divini Redemptoris*, that 'expressly forbade Catholics from collaboration of any kind with communism'. He was also to persuade the pope to denounce Nazi persecution of Jews and convince him that Allied demands for unconditional surrender did not contradict Vatican insistence on a peace of 'justice and charity' that might lead the pope to support a negotiated settlement.[30]

Taylor's failures were less his responsibility than flaws in Roosevelt's approach. The president's entreaties to Pius to endorse Allied aid to Russia combined with such unrealistically optimistic claims about the status of religion under Joseph Stalin that anyone would have had difficulty presenting them – especially to this pope. Pius was fiercely anti-communist, dating at least to his days as papal nuncio to Bavaria, when participants in the short-lived 1919 revolution invaded his residence to requisition his limousine and threatened him with a rifle. 'Horrified by the invasion' of the communists, he 'was especially pained by their demand for the car, since he had a soft spot for his Mercedes-Benz, describing it fondly as a "splendid carriage, with pontifical coat of arms."'[31]

Anti-communist animus influenced not only Pius' attitude to the Soviet Union but to Jews. 'In his early days in Munich, he wrote of a "grim Russian-

Jewish-Revolutionary tyranny" and during the dozen years he spent in Germany, he made constant mention of the Jewish backgrounds of socialists and communists'.[32] Thus, Pius was not the ideal recipient of either Roosevelt's pleas to criticise anti-Semitism or his incredible claims about the Soviets conveyed by Taylor in September 1941: 'in so far as I am informed, churches in Russia are open' and 'there is a real possibility that Russia may as a result of the present conflict recognize freedom of religion'. Pius' response, which Taylor brought to Washington, made no mention of Russia or Jews, but expressed appreciation for American efforts to aid 'innocent and helpless victims' of the war.[33] American Catholic bishops eventually supported the government's policy – distinguishing between Soviet authorities and the Russian people – that they earlier employed concerning Nazi Germany.

Pius' main concern was Rome's sanctity. In meeting Taylor on 10 September 1941, he expressed that concern as a threat and repeated the message conveyed previously to Osborne and Tittmann: 'if the Vatican City State or any of the basilicas, churches or pontifical buildings and institutions in Rome' were hit, 'the Holy See could not remain silent'. The pope warned that a British attack against Rome could 'modify or disturb' the 'cordial relations existing between the Holy See and England'.[34] Taylor presented the pope's concerns to Churchill at Chequers on 28 September and to his foreign secretary, Anthony Eden, the next day. On 29 September, Churchill addressed the House of Commons. He asserted, 'we have as much right to bomb Rome as the Italians had to bomb London last year when they thought we were going to collapse, and we should not hesitate to bomb Rome to the best of our ability and as heavily as possible if the course of the war should render such action convenient and helpful'.[35] Although the Italians had not actually succeeded in bombing London, British officials regularly invoked Italian air attacks in response to Vatican pleas to spare Rome.[36] Thus, it was unsurprising that Churchill would reject them. That he would do so publicly within two days of Taylor's entreaties highlights the envoy's limited influence.

Taylor returned to Washington, briefed the president, and gave him the pope's memorandum. A few days later, Taylor outlined his views 'on indiscriminate bombing' that he handed to Roosevelt when they met again in November.[37] Reflecting Taylor's unusual status as the president's friend and personal representative, the memorandum betrays a forthright tone atypical of most diplomatic communications. It also forms the basis for a number of proposals Taylor would advance over the next two years to spare Rome from destruction – and constitutes *prima facie* evidence of the falsity of a propaganda stunt that Mussolini's allies directed against him the following year. Taylor claimed,

> the bombing of residential and commercial sections of cities and towns is a horrible business. It reaches in general no military objectives. It is quite inaccurate, taking toll of the innocent, the afflicted, the young and the helpless. It wantonly destroys property, the savings of the hard-working and the provident. It spares neither hospitals, orphanages or churches. It heightens in some countries like England the determination to endure and to repay in kind.

Three elements of Taylor's statement are noteworthy. First, its religious imagery – emphasising the suffering of innocents, sanctity of churches, and punishment of sinners in the afterlife – hints at Taylor's views on bombing in the Christian tradition of 'Just War'. Second was concern for protecting property, especially property acquired by hard work and savings, like his own path to material success in business. Third, and most striking, is how much Taylor's statement was at variance with the attitude of the leader of the only Power then carrying out bombing against Italy: Churchill. The prime minister's views on the effects of bombing cities disagreed with Taylor's on both military effectiveness and the impact on Italy's population.

When Italy entered the war against the United States after Pearl Harbour, Taylor's position as Roosevelt's representative became more complicated; the only place he could stay in Italy was at the Vatican. On a trip there in September 1942, Vatican representatives, including an American priest working for the Secretariat of State, met him at the airport. Mussolini's government would not permit Tittmann to leave his Vatican premises to meet Taylor's plane.[38]

Taylor's September 1942 meetings with Pius mirrored those the year before when discussing the bombing of Rome, even with Taylor returning via London to meet Churchill. The pope's appeals were 'undoubtedly motivated by the recent beginning of large-scale night bombing of Italian cities by the R.A.F'.[39] Pius condemned the belligerents for failing to heed his plea 'to show some feeling of pity and charity for the sufferings of civilians, for helpless women and children, for the sick and the aged, on whom a rain of terror, fire, destruction and havoc pours down from a guiltless sky'.[40] He requested that Taylor convey his appeal personally to Roosevelt: if 'aerial bombardments must continue to form part of this harrowing war, let them with all possible care be directed only against objects of military value and spare the homes of non-combatants and the treasured shrines of art and religion'. In London, at a dinner party with the Churchill family and America's ambassador, James Winant, Taylor reported his view that the Vatican favoured the Allied cause and asked the prime minister to spare Rome from bombing. Churchill refused. Taylor then requested a British public commitment to limit bombing to military targets. Churchill again refused: night bombing 'does not lend itself to accurate bombing of military objectives only'. He did not intend to discontinue the practice.[41]

Barely a week after Taylor returned home, the RAF raided Naples, Messina, Crotone, Licata, and Palermo.[42] The Vatican apparently expected better results

from meeting with Roosevelt's personal representative. Cicognani received a telegram from the Vatican expressing alarm at remarks Eden had made clarifying that there was no Allied 'agreement not to bomb Rome'. Cicognani sent Taylor an urgent message requesting a meeting. On 30 October, Taylor visited him at the apostolic nunciature and received a papal plea for Taylor's intercession with Roosevelt to 'avoid destruction in the Eternal City'. Secretary of State Cordell Hull agreed to Taylor's request to meet that same afternoon but proposed that Taylor raise the matter of bombing Rome directly with Roosevelt.[43] After meeting the president a few days later, Taylor headed to Florida for the winter.

Meanwhile, Vatican criticism intensified. In mid-November, the archbishop of Genoa, Cardinal Maglione, reported to Pius that 30,000 people were homeless, more than 20 churches and seminaries damaged, three hospitals hit, and the archbishop's residence destroyed. Milan's civilian neighbourhoods and population suffered attacks as well. Maglione accused the British of making a grave 'psychological error' by 'not limiting their bombings in Italy to military objectives'. In Genoa and Milan, people now tended 'to place the British, whom they had always believed more humane, in the same class with the Germans'. In reporting the conversation, Tittmann concluded, 'my only remark was that the bombing of military objectives, without hitting the closely populated areas as well, might be difficult because of Genoese topography'.[44] In fact, hitting the populated areas was an objective of the air campaign against Italy, as Churchill cabled Roosevelt that same week: 'All the industrial centres should be attacked in an intense fashion, every effort being made to render them *uninhabitable* and to *terrorize* and paralise [*sic*] the population'.[45]

Seeking to counter Vatican criticism, Osborne offered a more detailed response to Maglione to be 'placed in the hands of the Holy Father and other high Vatican officials'. It made several points, but the gist was that responsibility for the bombing was ultimately Mussolini's for getting Italy into the war – supporting an ally carrying out its own atrocities with hardly a complaint from Pius.[46] It is not clear how genuinely interested Maglione was in understanding the British position or how much he accepted the implicit charge of hypocrisy lodged against the Vatican for its longstanding support of Mussolini's government. Increasingly delicate relations between the Vatican and the fascist state likely influenced his motives – in addition to humanitarian ones of sparing civilian lives. The Italian Catholic Church had heretofore been generally supportive of Mussolini's foreign policy, including the conquest of Ethiopia.[47] By autumn 1942, however, enthusiasm for Mussolini's war aims waned, even at the Vatican, and the *Duce*'s government became increasingly suspicious of Pius' Allied contacts, especially Taylor.

Fascist government and press hostility towards America intensified after Allied landings in North Africa in November 1942 and the relentless bombing

throughout the month of cities in Sicily, Sardinia, and southern Italy. Naples and Brindisi suffered particular damage, with high civilian casualties.[48] On 15 November Roberto Farinacci, the Fascist boss of Cremona, published an article in his *Regime Fascista*, criticising Taylor and the Vatican newspaper *L'Osservatore Romano*. Farinacci had long 'served the role of Fascist stick in dealing with the Church' and, here, Taylor suffered 'collateral damage' in a blow aimed at the Vatican.[49] In a passage mixing factual and fake news, Farinacci wrote,

> since it is certain that Myron Taylor was a guest at the Vatican and that upon his return to Washington he stated he had confirmation that it would take only a few bombings to undermine the structure and resistance of the Italian people, we believe we have the right to ask with whom representatives of the Jew Roosevelt [*sic*] talked inside the walls. [50]

The implication is that some combination of Catholic officials, Jewish refugees in the Vatican, or foreign representatives meeting there had conveyed to Taylor sensitive information about popular opinion amongst Italians under bombardment. That the Vatican should be a venue for exchanging such intelligence would have constituted a violation of its neutral status and, in Farinacci's view, *L'Osservatore Romano* should have denounced Taylor. Given knowledge of Taylor's sincere opposition to bombing Rome, it strains credibility that he would offer Roosevelt a prescription for victory echoing Churchill, with whom Taylor debated precisely this point on more than one occasion. Tellingly, Farinacci did not dispute the information about the Italian public's fragile state that Taylor supposedly conveyed to Roosevelt to advocate for further bombings of Italian cities.

The day after the *Regime Fascista* attack, Maglione sought Osborne and Tittmann and told them the exact opposite of what Farinacci claimed Taylor reported to Washington: the Genoa and Milan bombings were hardening anti-British opinion rather than weakening support for Mussolini. Given the Fascist government's extensive network of informants within the Vatican, Maglione could have expected his conversation to make its way to Mussolini with the clear message, 'Don't blame me!' A week later the Vatican published a declaration on *L'Osservatore Romano*'s front page that Farinacci's claim was 'absolutely without foundation' and Taylor 'had categorically denied having uttered the words attributed'.[51]

American diplomats in Berne monitoring the Italian press argued, 'the principal reason' for Farinacci's article was 'to furnish a scapegoat to the regime … to side-track public anger levelled at the Government because of the recent R.A.F. air raids'.[52] But it was Mussolini who created the fake news about Taylor, perhaps believing it. On 25 October, Foreign Minister Galeazzo Ciano wrote in his diary that Mussolini, 'irritated with Taylor and with the Vatican …. attributes the massive bombing of the cities of upper Italy to the

discussions with the American messenger'. 'That fool', he said, 'returned to America to report that the Italians are at their limit and with a few hard blows it will be easy to knock them out'.[53] Mussolini assumed that Taylor 'found out these things from the Holy See', which collected reports from local parish priests. Like Farinacci, Mussolini did not dispute the accuracy of information about the Italian public's disillusion and frustration; but he seems to have imagined that Taylor used that information to advocate increasing pressure on Italy through targeting civilians – the last thing Taylor favoured. Nevertheless, he instructed Ciano to inform the Vatican, 'if Myron Taylor tries to return to Italy he will be put in handcuffs'.[54]

Taylor spent November working from the United States with his Vatican interlocutors to clear his name from Farinacci's attacks. He also sought to learn about the charges his British counterparts were making concerning Vatican hypocrisy regarding aerial bombardment. In November 1942, Lord Halifax, the British ambassador at Washington, sent Taylor the complete list of churches, hospitals, schools, convents, and other institutions of all denominations harmed by Axis attacks against Britain up to mid-1941. The document ran 11 pages, single-spaced, listing each building by name, location, and degree of damage. The churches alone included 890 destroyed and 2,360 damaged.[55] Taylor forwarded the document to Cicognani in early December, with no acknowledgement of its receipt.[56]

In late November 1942, Taylor sought to follow up on his meeting with Roosevelt earlier that month. The outcome was less than satisfactory. On 30 November, Taylor asked Roosevelt's secretary, Grace Tully, to dictate a letter to the president summarising what he had taken away from their discussion: Roosevelt's willingness to disavow British plans to bomb Rome. In Taylor's reconstruction, the president had 'suggested an independent course of action, subject to your discussion with our own military command'. Taylor proposed: 'if you could now instruct me to make that policy clear to the Pope, in confidence, it would have far reaching effect' and 'further improve the favourable position we now occupy at the Vatican, with the Italian people', and with 'segments of the Italian government'. Taylor suggested that in Italy, 'there are many who would welcome a change of government under American protection'. The British 'will never be in such a favourable position, because even the Italian public are without enthusiasm for them'. Taylor concluded by stressing, 'time is most essential', and 'this is the moment for a move that will further cement our position and reinforce our efforts in parallel action with the Pope'.[57]

Taylor's understanding of Italian public opinion was the opposite of both the prevailing British view and the one Farinacci attributed to him. Taylor wanted to spare Italian civilians unnecessary harm, even though Italy and America were fighting; Churchill and his advisors wanted to punish Italians for supporting the Fascist regime and its war. For Taylor, avoiding civilian

harm would make Italians friendly to the United States, whilst causing damage would see them hostile; for Churchill, wreaking havoc made them hostile to Mussolini and could drive Italy out of the war. More striking than Taylor's apparent animus against the British – understandable given Churchill and Eden's repeated rude rejections of his pleas on behalf of Rome – was his naïve expectation that Roosevelt would break with a major ally to curry favour with the Vatican. Whatever encouraging remarks Roosevelt had uttered in early November – and he enjoyed a reputation for appearing to tell his visitors what they wanted to hear – he lost no time in disabusing Taylor in words drafted by Hull:

> I question the advisability of an independent course different from that of our principal associate in the war … . I cannot give you the instructions you request even though I recognize the importance of the considerations which you set forth.[58]

By December 1942, Taylor's mission to secure an Allied commitment to spare Rome had failed. Churchill consistently rejected his pleas, and Roosevelt denied any suggestion of acting independently of Britain. Meanwhile Mussolini's government sought to undermine Taylor's authority and weaken the Vatican as a neutral interlocutor. Nevertheless, faced with intensifying pressure from Pius and his representatives, Taylor sought a new approach to avoid bombing: removing Rome's military facilities and declaring it an 'open city'. An 'open city' in military law and common parlance refers to 'a city which is a military objective but is completely demilitarized and left open to enemy occupation in order to gain immunity, under international law, from bombardment and attack'.[59] During the Second World War, several European cities became open in this sense – amongst them, Kraków, Brussels, and Paris. Rome is perhaps most often associated with the term, thanks to the eponymous 1945 film by Roberto Rossellini, *Roma, città aperta*, but attempts to negotiate its open status – a preoccupation of the Vatican and, therefore, Taylor – failed to spare it from aerial attack.

Vatican efforts to prevent the bombing of Rome accelerated as the Allies attacked other Italian cities in the course of the North African campaign and then the invasion of Sicily. Much of the bombing was to aid land battles by achieving air superiority over Axis forces.[60] Yet Churchill and his advisors were committed to the combined objectives of damaging industrial production in Italian cities and undermining their residents' morale. When Americans took over much of the bombing of southern Italy starting in December 1942, violence intensified in anticipation of the Sicily landings.[61] Vatican officials concomitantly stepped up pressure on Taylor to intercede with Roosevelt. Between them, they devised a new plan to protect Rome, one likewise destined for failure.

The papal holdings in and around Rome had become vulnerable to attack by late November 1941 when a German air command established itself at

Frascati, a hill town a short distance to the southeast. It included *Luftwaffe* Air Marshal Albert Kesselring and a staff of 200 officers, 1,000 air force personnel, and 100 aircraft. The *Luftwaffe* sent a further 80 officers to nearby Castel Gandolfo, the pope's summer residence. On Christmas Day 1941, as the locals welcomed the German visitors with presents, including flasks of Frascati wine, Pius' argument for maintaining the inviolability of papal territory became increasingly implausible. For Ciano, the German presence at Frascati would hinder the Vatican's efforts 'to prevent the aerial bombardment of Rome'.[62] Still, Vatican officials persisted, working through their intermediary, Taylor.[63]

Taylor meanwhile met with Archbishop Francis Spellman of New York, Roosevelt, and Hull on demilitarising Rome so that it would be considered 'undefended' and legally immune from attack. On 12 December, he reported to Hull 'impatience at the Vatican' that nothing had come of the proposal – but not much had happened on the Vatican side either.[64] Maglione reported 'oral but nonetheless official' assurances that Italian military forces would leave Rome. The British were suspicious, assuming Mussolini's regime had pushed the Vatican to get a commitment not to bomb as a *quid pro quo* for demilitarising Rome. Maglione insisted that demilitarisation was a Vatican initiative, consistent with its longstanding efforts to avoid the bombing of the Eternal City.[65] Unknown to Taylor, the British and Americans had been considering a demilitarised Rome through their respective ambassadors, with Tittmann providing further information from the legation in Switzerland. Moreover, Halifax and Hull discussed issuing an ultimatum to Mussolini's government: the Italian king, Mussolini, government officers, and the high command and military staff 'must leave Rome. So, too, all German organisations including military mission, Naval Liaison Staff, airmen, civilian officials, members of Germany air transport company Italuft, German staff at Rome air fields', and Swiss officials would verify the evacuation.[66]

Ultimately, however, the Allies decided against an ultimatum – not least, as it might commit them to bomb, say if the Italians failed to meet the conditions, when they would not otherwise have done so. London reiterated its long-held position: 'The British Government's view has all along been that while maintaining our right to bomb Rome at any time we should in fact carefully choose our moment for such action' – probably 'when the collapse of Italian resistance seemed imminent. Even then they might undertake it only if it was believed decisive in breaking Italian morale and resistance'.[67] Rome's fate seemed sealed by late spring 1943. On 11 June, Hull summoned Taylor to report a conversation with Admiral William Leahy, the president's military advisor: 'the British had proposed to bombard military objectives such as the railroad yards and facilities at Rome in order to damage the transportation system, so as to interfere with the passage of troops and supplies to the south … . our general staff had agreed with the British'.

Hull suggested that Taylor confidentially convey the information to the papal delegate 'and indicate the imminent danger of this without quoting my authority'. Taylor did so within the hour.[68]

Cicognani responded on 25 June reiterating Vatican arguments against bombing Rome, thanking Taylor for his personal commitment to the cause, and making the most explicit threats yet of the pope's response if the city be bombarded:

> the Holy Father will voice his open protest to the world … . [the bombing would] arouse the resentment of the whole world, and particularly of Catholics … . there will arise not only in Europe and in Latin America but everywhere a troublesome division of spirits, and most certainly a deep seated antagonism.[69]

Three days later he sent Taylor another letter conveying further threats from Maglione – 'an incited or spontaneous uprising of the people' that would make it 'difficult if not impossible for the Holy See to guarantee the security of the Vatican itself and of the Allied diplomatic personnel'. Maglione acknowledged that the Nazis might bomb the Vatican even as the Allies were determined to spare it to pin blame on their enemies. Yet, he was prepared to give the Germans a pass, 'in the calm judgement of posterity the full responsibility would fall on the Allies if they give occasion for such a tragic disaster by bombing any part of the City of Rome'.[70] Cicognani conveyed Maglione's last attempt to revive the 'open city' proposal by citing several Vatican efforts to convince the government to move its military commands from Rome. Maglione claimed more success than the situation merited: that Mussolini had 'transferred the Supreme Command and the General Staffs of the Army, Navy and Air Forces', and the German military liaison offices 'have either already followed the respective Italian Commands or are about to do so'.[71]

This was far too little and far too late. Maglione ignored the main concern of Allied military planners – Rome as a major transhipment route for German military supplies heading south to bolster the fight against the British and American armies. The faithful Taylor nevertheless wrote a note, 'Dear Mr. President', to offer a suggestion that the Vatican had notably failed to make:

> I am wondering if we were to say to the Vatican that if the Holy See would guarantee that all military installations, activities, and personnel were removed from Rome *and the use of the railroad facilities for all military purposes were abandoned*, the City would not be bombed … . You might consider this.[72]

In July, conveying further to Hull Vatican warnings about the dire consequences of bombing, Taylor added a few of his own: 'distemper in Catholic circles in America, especially among the Irish', 'cohesion among the Axis powers', and anti-Americanism in Italy, where the United States would be

seen as 'blood-thirsty and ruthless' as the British.[73] Taylor then made a significant departure from his role as diplomatic envoy to offer military advice that he claimed could forestall and improve upon the strategy of bombing Rome:

> To put a stop to the industrial production and railroad facilities in Italy, the bombardment of hydraulic power production in the north would be much more effective. As you know the whole country operates on electric power, hydraulically produced, as they have no coal; and second, the Allies can bomb miles and miles of main railroad track along the routes of the west coast of the interior route, Milan and Bologna to Rome, without resorting to the unpredictable psychological reaction of bombing Rome. We also have to consider the question of the Vatican guaranteeing [sic] the removal of all military installations in Rome, as indicated in my recent memorandum.[74]

Although seemingly grasping at straws, Taylor offered an alternative Allied strategy that in retrospect exhibits a considerable degree of military plausibility and much higher accordance with legal norms than the massive bombing campaign conducted instead.

Despite Taylor's relative unfamiliarity with international law, including the laws of war, his intuition about aerial bombardment was right. Bombing undefended cities was illegal, so his efforts, however futile, to have Rome designated an 'open city' was consistent with legal thinking at the time.[75] The alternative military strategy he offered to Hull less than two weeks before the first bombing of Rome also conformed better to legal norms than did bombing facilities in populated areas to undermine civilian morale. Taylor's proposal 'to put a stop to the industrial production and railroad facilities' through 'bombardment of hydraulic power production in the north' could have worked better than targeting urban factories and railroad junctions, even though both bombing strategies put civilian lives and property at risk.

What would have been the effect of destroying the hydroelectric power system in Italy? Regarding harm to civilians, if the dams were bombed, flooding would presumably have engulfed surrounding areas, including nearby villages or towns. In the past, Italy had experienced the collapse of some of its dams, most recently the 1923 failure of the Pian del Gleno near Bergamo, with direct fatalities numbering in the hundreds.[76] A bombing campaign intended to cripple Italy's electrical grid, if it disabled the dams supplying water for the hydroelectric system, would have cost many lives. Even with the dams intact – a doubtful prospect given the proximity of the electrical generators to the reservoirs and the poor degree of accuracy of aerial bombardment at the time – the toll of civilian lives could have been quite high. Yet, it would not likely have reached the tens of thousands who perished in bombed Italian cities.

Regarding effectiveness, from the time the first hydroelectric systems were built in the late nineteenth century to supply Milan, Genoa, and Rome,

waterpower dominated Italian electricity production, accounting for more than 90 percent of supply by the late 1930s. It was the main source of electricity until the 1950s, when the United States persuaded Italy to move towards fossil fuels, partly through unwillingness in its economic aid programme to help maintain Italian hydroelectric equipment.[77] As Taylor argued, a concerted attack against Italy's hydropower system could have rendered great damage to the country's production of electricity.

What would have been the legal status of such attacks? In the late twentieth century and after, the deliberate destruction of an enemy country's electrical system – as inflicted by the United States against Iraq in 1991, for example – posed questions of disproportionate harm to civilians by jeopardising the provision of clean water, sanitation, and health care, and depriving families of electricity for their homes.[78] In Italy at the end of the 1930s, however, hydropower never accounted for more than five percent of domestic electricity use. In the Apennines and Adriatic side of the peninsula, most hydropower found exclusive use in chemical and iron production.[79] Destroying the hydro system would not have made much impact on household access to electricity, but it could have severely damaged industries essential to fabricating war materials and indirectly food supplies.[80] Hydropower was the main source of electricity for the railroads, as Italy, lacking domestic coal reserves, had made an effort to transition from steam to electric engines much earlier and more persistently than other countries.[81]

Allied military planners reckoned that disrupting rail traffic could speed the defeat of Axis forces by hindering re-enforcements. Yet fierce disagreements erupted amongst American and British advisors about how to do so. On one side, Solly Zuckerman, the South African-born primatologist advising Whitehall on bombing strategy, favoured attacking marshalling yards and transportation nodes within cities at the cost of extensive harm to civilian lives and property – less so, he argued, than indiscriminate area bombing.[82] He was impressed by the 20 consecutive days of bombing in May-June 1943 that led to the surrender of the Italian garrison at Pantelleria in anticipation of the Allied invasion of Sicily.[83] On the American side, advisors like Charles Kindleberger and Walt W. Rostow claimed that destroying rail bridges would be more effective than attacking marshalling yards: it would take longer to re-build bridges than to re-route tracks or re-configure damaged junctures.[84] In retrospect, evidence supports the views of Zuckerman's critics that city bombing was less effective than destroying bridges in both the battle for Rome and operations in France in advance of the Normandy invasion.[85] Noteworthy, however, is that none of the advisors, nor their superiors, appear to have given much attention to Taylor's proposal to attack the source of hydroelectric power for the railroad system – a strategy that might have offered greater military effectiveness at less cost to civilians. Only in late 1944 did military planners focus on the electrical facilities – like transformers –

powering rail traffic coming through the Brenner Pass in the northeast; that route accounted for more than 50 percent of Germany's re-supply.[86]

Despite the plausibility of his advice to bomb the hydroelectric system instead of Rome, Taylor failed to convince the president. On 10 July 1943, the day after Taylor conveyed the proposal to Hull, Roosevelt sent a message to Pius. Published in the *New York Times*, it announced the landing of Allied troops on Italian soil, accompanied by aerial bombardment. The president promised, 'churches and religious institutions will, to the extent that it is within our power, be spared the devastations of war', and 'the neutral status of Vatican City as well as the papal domains throughout Italy will be respected'.[87] It was not within Roosevelt's power to keep those promises, as the world learned nine days later. On 19 July 1943, in perhaps 'the largest single bombing raid in history to date', more than 540 aircraft dropped 1,000 tons of bombs on four target areas of Rome – the Ciampino and Littorio airfields and the Littorio and San Lorenzo rail marshalling yards.[88] According to the United States 321st Bombardment Group, returning crews 'were quick to reassure that "no bombs fell in the area surrounding the Vatican"'. Yet, Axis radio broadcasts, as expected, quickly condemned the American air attacks, terming them 'ruthless and barbarous assaults carried out on a sacred shrine', namely the Basilica of San Lorenzo *fuori le mura*.[89]

American officials and press downplayed civilian harm caused by the bombing. The *New York Times* emphasised the extensive training of bombing crews and care taken that 'religious edifices marked in red on flyer's maps … be avoided at all cost'. It mentioned only parenthetically that Vatican radio reported the Basilica as 'seriously damaged'.[90] *Times* correspondent Herbert Matthews, 'embedded' at Allied headquarters in North Africa, sought to cast doubt on the significance of the Basilica's destruction: 'if one bomb out of hundreds did drop there, that is no reflection on the remarkable accuracy of the bombing as a whole. Rome has so many churches in every part of the city that no target could be chosen that did not endanger some church' – precisely the argument that the Vatican made to advocate sparing Rome entirely from bombardment.[91] Matthews was not worried about the San Lorenzo church: 'anyone who has seen it must agree that, from an artistic viewpoint, there is no need to get too sentimental about the damage, which would doubtless be reparable'. Besides, he added, echoing Osborne's arguments, Axis forces destroyed many beautiful churches in England. Moreover, Romans are 'probably the least religious of all Catholics', so unlikely to fret over damage to churches. In short, Allied bombers 'did a great military job and did it with an absolute minimum of civilian and religious damage'.[92] In another article, the *Times* reported Hull's assurances. The bombing was 'confined to military objectives', he insisted, 'notably railway yards'.[93]

Some of the immediate reaction of officials and the press has made its way into historical accounts. Conflating intentions with results, even an otherwise

sound history of the air campaign against Italy reports, for example, 'damage to non-military targets and civilians in Rome was minimal as aircrews were especially careful'.[94] The perspective from the ground contradicts such accounts. The attacks took place during the day, between 11 AM and 3 PM, as people went about their business. Although aiming mainly for rail yards, the bombers thoroughly destroyed the San Lorenzo working-class neighbourhood. The attack constituted a massacre 'more macabre' than against other Italian cities, because its epicentre was the cemetery of Verano. 'The neighbourhood, caught in the middle of the day in its quotidian normality, was crossed by a scorching wind of death that left in its wake an unexpected and therefore all the more traumatic panorama of destruction'.[95] Particularly disturbing were accounts of decapitated corpses, including bodies without heads walking several steps before falling. There were thousands of civilian casualties, as many as two or three thousand dead.[96]

Although carried out by American forces, the air raid fit well the British objective of attacking militarily relevant targets whilst terrorising the civilian population. The Americans prided themselves on carrying out daylight raids and 'precision bombing' of specific military targets in contrast to the British approach of carpet-bombing entire cities by night. However, the technology of the era was clearly not up to the task. Thus, for the American air forces, 'precision bombing of Italy had meant the area bombing of precise targets'.[97] Worth noting is that American bomber crews evinced a more realistic understanding of what was possible than the political leaders or journalists. The informal history of the 488th air squadron, the unit of which Joseph Heller was a member, conveys that reality, with much of the black humour that later found its way into *Catch-22*. According to the report, 'in addition to airfields which were often difficult to locate, the 488th had an almost perfect record when it came to dropping bulls-eyes on cemeteries … . No matter what the target pinpoints, we always hit cemeteries on Saturdays and churches on Sundays'.[98]

The results inevitably harmed civilians, and it was difficult to avoid the impression that the harm was intentional. According to testimony from survivors of the Rome raids, the attacks included not only bombs but also strafing by machine gun fire directed at 'people, animals, and things', a practice familiar from previous attacks on Naples and elsewhere. The flyers acknowledged these attacks, which they called 'buzzing' or 'buzz jobs'.[99] Alas, the terrorising aspect of the July bombing was a source of political support back home. Reporting from Washington, DC, one correspondent wrote, 'The impression here was that the attack on Rome … was intended to be a blow at Italian morale as much as at railways and military installations'. As the article's sub-title announced, 'Republican and Democratic Senators Voice Approval – Smash at Morale Seen'.[100] It was the objective long articulated by Churchill and his advisors – drive Italy from the war at a point when the

Roman population was at its most vulnerable and wavering. Legality and morality aside, did the bombing of Rome serve that purpose?

Mussolini received news of the attack whilst listening to a two-hour monologue from Adolph Hitler at a meeting in Feltre, in the northeast Veneto region, to discuss German aid to Italy to repel the Allied invasion launched earlier that month. Italy's ill-considered participation in the Axis invasion of the Soviet Union had led to vast losses of soldiers and rendered its armed forces incapable of territorial defence without German assistance. Mussolini came away empty-handed, as Hitler offered neither the aircraft nor armoured divisions the Italians requested.[101] Six days after the bombing, on 25 July 1943, following a contentious meeting of the Fascist Grand Council, King Victor Emmanuel III demanded Mussolini's resignation as prime minister, had him arrested, and installed Marshal Pietro Badoglio in his place. As news spread, cheering Romans began burning photographs of Mussolini and destroying Fascist symbols; they celebrated the imminent end of the war. Yet, as Badoglio announced that night over the radio, 'the war continues'.[102] Hesitating to accept the Allies' demand of unconditional surrender, he sought with Vatican support again to secure Rome's status as an 'open city'. The bombing continued.

On 13 August, the *New York Times* reported from Switzerland that a few days earlier a mass celebrating the feast day of St. Lawrence occurred in the Basilica of San Lorenzo. The article's main point was clear from its subtitle: 'Service in Rome is Held Proof Italians Exaggerated Damage'.[103] The day the article appeared Rome suffered its second major Allied bombing: 278 aircraft again hit the Littorio and San Lorenzo freight yards, damaging the neighbourhoods of Prenestino, Tuscolan, Appio, and Casilino, killing 500 civilians, and igniting fires that burned for a week.[104] Rome would endure more than 50 further attacks before the war's end.[105] Other Italian cities, from Turin and Milan in the north to Messina and Taormina in Sicily, came under bombardment the same day, and more later that month, with thousands killed and displaced.[106] Pius continued to express dismay over the attacks, his representatives adopting increasingly sharp tones in their correspondence with Taylor. Maglione stressed the 'terroristic character' of Allied bombings across Italy.[107] Indeed, at one point, Allied bombs damaged his apartment in the Monte Mario district of Rome, and he made sure Taylor knew that its immunity from attack had been 'respected by the Germans, but not by the Americans'.[108]

In response to the August bombing of Rome, Badoglio unilaterally declared the Italian capital an open city, and on 8 September announced an armistice with the Allies. His radio broadcast that evening, in the words of a Roman diarist, was 'so sudden and unexpected that it made people believe the war was finally over, and the euphoria of the moment distracted from the reality' of 'the presence of German troops on the peninsula'.[109] The

Wehrmacht, which for weeks had been making its way through the Brenner Pass in the north, invaded and occupied Rome that same night.

Did the Allied bombing of Rome drive Italy out of the war as Churchill had long promised? The Italian case is probably the closest to an 'exception that proves the rule': punishment of civilians is far less effective than bombing to influence military operations. Yet, this conclusion needs qualification. First, despite what the British originally hoped, airpower alone was not responsible for Italy's defeat. The invasion of Sicily and German failure to promise more than a holding operation in the north of the country played a major role in convincing the king and the Fascist leadership to depose Mussolini. Second, in power for two decades, Mussolini was increasingly losing popular support – not least because of the strictures imposed by the regime after joining Hitler's war: Italian food rations by the end of 1942 were less than one-half of what Germans received.[110] The war was causing resentment amongst Italians on this count already only a few months into it, with Italian propaganda seeking unconvincingly to compensate: "Thus, just before the sale of coffee was forbidden, long medical articles appeared, describing the deleterious effects of coffee on the nerves and constitution: 'wine is far less harmful'.[111] '[M]eat rationing was preceded by similar articles in praise of vegetarianism; and now the abolition of private cars is accompanied by long articles in praise of bicycling!' Police informant reports suggested, 'part of the population had the sense that fascism was ready to fall', a victim of its own corruption and incompetence, and that the regime used the war to distract attention from its failures.[112]

Indeed these two considerations – poor military performance and discrediting the regime – are directly connected. In the late 1930s 'the regime faced a crisis in its relations with the country as a whole', to the extent that Mussolini decided, 'not to proclaim a general mobilization in June 1940' when he joined Hitler's war because 'he did not want to alarm public opinion or to put its loyalty to the test'.[113] Even before the Sicilian invasion, it was 'defeat on the North African front that sealed the fate of Italy's war and of the Fascist regime, not only because of the huge losses in terms of personnel – by the end of the war more than 400,000 Italian prisoners were in British hands, a large part of them captured in the battles in East and North Africa – but also because defeat on this front marked the failure of the whole Fascist programme'.[114] Even scholars who disagree on the goals and methods of Italian Fascism share a conviction that the regime was doomed to failure long before defeat in war sealed its fate.[115]

Aside from the long-term influence of military defeat and Fascist failure, a careful study of the bombing's effect on the decision to depose Mussolini identifies several contributing proximate factors in addition to the 19 July attack:

> [F]our events, the disaster in Russia, the poor defence of Sicily, the failure at Feltre to obtain the requested German military aid, and the Rome raid, contributed to breaking the spirit of Mussolini. The bombing may have directly contributed to Mussolini's failure at Feltre, which, besides the material effects of the destruction in the "Eternal City", gave proof to all of Italy's defencelessness.[116]

Whatever the impact of the 19 July bombing, Mussolini's fall from power was only temporary, and, to the Italians' crushing disappointment, did not end the war. In the wake of the second Allied bombing raid on 13 August, the king and Badoglio fled Rome for the protection of Allied-held areas to the south. In September, a German commando squad rescued Mussolini from prison and installed him as head of the German puppet regime called the Republic of Salò.[117] Whatever the benefits of Italian surrender, the Allies continued to fight in Italy for nearly a year and one-half more, at a cost of some 60,000 Allied troops killed and more than 120,000 Italian civilian deaths.[118] Moreover, to the extent that the quick defeat of Mussolini's regime convinced Allied airpower enthusiasts that bombing civilians was the route to victory, one can add to the tally the lives of hundreds of thousands more civilians in the other Axis Powers.

In Rome, Taylor's colleagues, Tittmann and Osborne, had become increasingly outspoken in opposing their countries' bombing raids against Rome. Osborne sent the Foreign Office a report in March 1944 describing 30 fatalities of an Allied attack on a hospital in Rome and a further 200 corpses mutilated and barely recognisable, the victims of two other raids. Insisting that the psychological consequences of such attacks were harming the Allied cause and helping the Germans, he requested forwarding his report to Washington.[119] Tittmann also continued to work to prevent further killing of Italian civilians. In August 1943, he sent Taylor detailed descriptions and a map of the papal domain at Castel Gandolfo for transmission to the War Department. The Vatican was sheltering 15,000 refugees on the property, including many Jews. But Allied commanders described the territory as 'saturated with Germans' to justify four attacks carried out in the first half of 1944, with hundreds of civilian deaths and about 191 million lire in property damage according to Vatican estimates. As Tittmann reported, the manager of the Vatican domains complained that he 'was sickened at the sight of so many dead bodies, but he had yet to see one dead German'.[120]

Despite his failure to prevent the bombing of Rome, Taylor's reputation seems not to have suffered in either Italy or the United States as he continued to serve as President Harry Truman's envoy to the Vatican into the post-war years. Indeed, Taylor met Pius in 1954 to negotiate American reparations for the damaged Vatican property of ten years earlier – an amount about one-half of what the pope's estimates had claimed.[121] The negotiated agreement marked an unusual coda to an unusual diplomatic career.

Notes

1. Myron C. Taylor, ed., *Wartime Correspondence between President and Pope Pius XII* (NY, 1947), 3. The next day, Roosevelt wrote a letter of introduction for Taylor to take to Rome: Roosevelt to Pius XII, 23 December 1939, MTP [Myron Taylor Papers, Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library, Ithaca, NY] Box 1, Folder 1. The materials related to the Rome bombing are in four additional folders prepared by Taylor for the archive, but in somewhat disorganised fashion: three of them labelled 'Bombing Rome', and one – the thickest – 'Bombing of Rome'. These notes use the names Taylor gave the folders – with the time period indicated in parentheses, but not in subsequent references: Bombing Rome (11 June-16 August 1943); Bombing Rome, Book #2 (17 September 1941–25 August 1943); Bombing Rome, Book #3 (27 May 1944–6 August 1943, in reverse chronological order); Bombing of Rome (17 September 1941–1 January 1943).
2. Marco Gioannini and Giulio Massobrio, *Bombardate l'Italia: storia della guerra di distruzione aerea, 1940–1945* (Milan, 2007), 12.
3. Robert C. Batchelder, *The Irreversible Decision, 1939–1950* (NY, 1961); Tami Davis Biddle, *Rhetoric and Reality in Air Warfare: The Evolution of British and American Ideas about Strategic Bombing, 1914–1945* (Princeton, NJ, 2002); Pierre-Etienne Bourneuf, *Bombarder l'Allemagne: L'offensive alliée sur les villes pendant la Deuxième Guerre mondiale* (Paris, 2014); Conrad C. Crane, *American Airpower Strategy in World War II: Bombs, Cities, Civilians, and Oil* (Lawrence, KS, 2016); A.C. Grayling, *Among the Dead Cities: The History and Moral Legacy of the WWII Bombing of Civilians in Germany and Japan* (NY, 2006); Sven Lindqvist, *A History of Bombing* (London, 2001); Ronald Schaffer, *Wings of Judgement: American Bombing in World War* II (Oxford, 1985); W.G. Sebald, *On the Natural History of Destruction* (NY, 2004); Michael S. Sherry, *The Rise of American Air Power: The Creation of Armageddon* (New Haven, CT, 1987); Yuki Tanaka and Marilyn B. Young, eds., *Bombing Civilians: A Twentieth Century History* (NY, 2009).
4. The best succinct study of the bombing of Rome is Claudia Baldoli, "Bombing the Eternal City," *History Today* 62, no. 5 (2012): 11–15. Rick Atkinson, *The Day of Battle: The War in Sicily and Italy, 1943–1944* (NY, 2007) provides an excellent overview of the war. For traditional military analyses, see Andrew J. Brookes, *Air War over Italy* (Sittingbourne, 2000); Robert S. Ehlers, Jr., *The Mediterranean Air War: Airpower and Allied Victory in World War II* [Kindle version] (Lawrence, KS, 2015); David Hapgood and David Richardson, *Monte Cassino: The Story of the Most Controversial Battle of World War II* (Cambridge, MA, 2002); Maurice G. Lihou, *Out of the Italian Night: Wellington Bomber Operations 1944–45* (Barnsley, 2008); F.M. Sallagar, *Operation 'Strangle' (Italy, Spring 1944): A Case Study of Tactical Air Interdiction*, US Air Force Project Rand Report R-851-PR (February 1972). For more recent studies incorporating the consequences for civilians, see Claudia Baldoli, Andrew Knapp, and Richard Overy, eds., *Bombing, States and Peoples in Western Europe 1940–1945* [Kindle version] (London, 2011); Claudia Baldoli and Andrew Knapp, *Forgotten Blitzes: France and Italy under Allied Air Attack, 1940–1945* (London, 2012); Richard Overy, *The Bombing War: Europe 1939–1945* [Apple ebook] (London, 2014).
5. Overy, *Bombing War*, 1573–174.
6. Gioannini and Massobrio, *Bombardate*, the most comprehensive overall study, also provides an extensive bibliography, including studies grouped and documented by 58 cities bombed. Giovanni Lafirenze compiled the most complete list of bombings of Italian cities and towns:http://biografiadiunabomba.anvcg.it/seconda-guerra-mondiale/. [hereafter, Lafirenze, Bombing list].

7. Hague Rules of Air Warfare (1923), http://www.lawofwar.org/hague_rules_of_air_warfare.htm.
8. Laws and Customs of War on Land (1907), http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/hague04.asp.
9. Overy, *Bombing War*, 29.
10. Franklin D. Roosevelt, 'An Appeal to Great Britain, France, Italy, Germany, and Poland to Refrain from Air Bombing of Civilians', 1 September 1939:. For more detail, see Batchelder, *Irreversible Decision*, 172–73, Biddle, *Rhetoric and Reality*.
11. Giulio Douhet, *Il dominio dell'aria* (1921), revised version 1927, translated in 1942 by Dino Ferrari as *Command of the Air* (Washington, DC, 1998). For Douhet's reception outside Italy, see Tami Davis Biddle, "Strategic Bombardment Expectation, Theory, and Practice in the Early Twentieth Century," in *The American Way of Bombing: Changing Ethical and Legal Norms, from Flying Fortresses to Drones*, ed. Matthew Evangelista and Henry Shue (Ithaca, NY, 2014). See also Paul K. Saint-Amour, "Air War Prophecy and Interwar Modernism," *Comparative Literature Studies* 42, no. 2 (2005): 130–61; Thomas Hippler, *Bombing the People: Giulio Douhet and the Foundations of Air-Power Strategy, 1884–1939* (Cambridge, 2013).
12. Iris Origo, *A Chill in the Air: An Italian War Diary, 1939–1940* [Apple ebook] (NY, 2017), 268.
13. Gioannini and Massobrio, *Bombardate*, 96; Bassignana, *Torino*, 7–8; Rastelli, *Bombe;* Overy, *Bombing War*, 1635–1637.
14. Ehlers, *Mediterranean Air War*, 29–30.
15. Overy, *Bombing War*, 257; Marco Fincardi, 'Anglo-American Air Attacks and the Rebirth of Public Opinion in Fascist Italy', in Baldoli, *Bombing, States and Peoples*, 244–45; Ministero dell difesa, Aeronautica militare, 'Un corpo aereo italiano sopra la manica' (nd); 'Il Duce's Blitz – Italy's Forgotten Role in the Battle of Britain', *Military History Now* (13 November 2013):; Peter Haining, *The Chianti Raiders: The Extraordinary Story of the Italian Air Force in the Battle of Britain* (London, 2005).
16. Robert Pape, *Bombing to Win: Air Power and Coercion in War* (Ithaca, NY, 1996); Michael Horowitz and Dan Reiter, "When Does Aerial Bombing Work? Quantitative Empirical Tests, 1917–1999," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 45, no. 2 (2001): 147–73.
17. Gioannini and Massobrio, *Bombardate*, 111–12.
18. Origo, *Chill in the Air*, 268; Overy, *Bombing War*, 1656–57. Fincardi, 'Air Attacks' is an excellent account of the impact of the combination of leaflets and bombing on the Italian public.
19. "R.A.F. Ready to Bomb Rome, Airman Insists," *NY Times*, November 7, 1940; Umberto Gentiloni Silveri and Maddalena Carli, *Bombardare Roma: Gli Alleati e la 'Città aperta' (1940–1944)* (Bologna, 2007), 51.
20. Robert P. Post, "Rome to Be Raided if Cairo or Athens Is Hit, British Warn, but Promise to Spare Vatican," *NY Times*, April 19, 1941.
21. Harold H. Tittmann, Jr. [Harold H. Tittmann, III, ed.], *Inside the Vatican of Pius XII: The Memoir of an American Diplomat during World War II* (NY, 2004), 65; BBC broadcast in Pius XII memorandum to Taylor, 17 September 1941, MTP Bombing Rome, Book #2.
22. W. David Curtiss and C. Evan Stewart, 'Myron C. Taylor: Cornell Benefactor, Industrial Tsar, and FDR's "Ambassador Extraordinary," Part 1', *Cornell Law Forum*, 33/1(2006), 7–8.
23. Taylor, *Wartime Correspondence*, 103.

24. See John S. Conway, "Myron C. Taylor's Mission to the Vatican 1940–1950," *Church History* 44, no. 1 (1975): 85–99 for the controversy of even appointing a representative to the pope.
25. "Vatican City: Pope to Get Jerusalem?" *Time*, July 8, 1940. For more detail on Protestant opposition to Taylor's appointment and re-appointment by President Harry Truman, see Rosanne Francis Saeli, 'A Biographical Sketch of Myron C. Taylor', a research paper for Red Creek Central School (Red Creek, NY, April 1971), 36–38.
26. Taylor later donated his Villa Schifanoia to the Catholic Church to set up a school of fine arts. It subsequently became part of the European University Institute.
27. Tittmann, *Inside the Vatican*, x.
28. *Ibid.*, 7.
29. Ibid., 4.
30. Taylor statement to Pius XII, 19 September 1942, MTP Box 1, Folder 1.
31. David I. Kertzer, *The Pope and Mussolini* [Apple ebook] (NY, 2014), 504–06, 508.
32. Ibid.
33. The letters of 3 and 20 September 1941 in Taylor, *Wartime Correspondence*, 61–64.
34. 'Memorandum Re Bombing Rome Given Myron Taylor September 17 1941 by His Holiness Pope Pius XII', MTP Bombing Rome, Book #2.
35. "Text of Prime Minister Churchill's Review of War in House of Commons," *NY Times*, October 1, 1941.
36. Ugo Mancini, *La guerra nelle terre del papa: I bombardamenti alleati tra Roma e Montecassino attraversando i Castelli Romani* (Milan, 2011), 30–31; Fincardi, 'Air Attacks'.
37. Taylor memorandum on indiscriminate bombing to Roosevelt, November 1941, MTP Bombing of Rome.
38. Tittmann, *Inside the Vatican*, 128.
39. Ibid., 133.
40. "Memorandum of His Holiness Pope Pius XII Re Bombing Civilian Populations," September 26, 1942, MTP Bombing of Rome.
41. Winant telegram [paraphrase] to Hull, 8 December 1942, in response to Taylor to Winant, 2 December 1942, summarising dinner conversation regarding the bombing of Rome, Ibid.
42. Lafirenze, Bombing list.
43. Cicognani to Taylor, 28 October 1942, Taylor to Roosevelt, 2 November 1942, both in MTP Bombing of Rome. The folder also contains 'No Pact Against Rome Raids', *NY Herald Tribune* (22 October 1942) quoting Eden.
44. Tittmann telegram [187], 17 November 1942, in Berne Legation to Hull, 20 November 1942, MTP Bombing of Rome. Maglione's interpretation of popular attitudes was at variance with what Fascist informants were conveying to local authorities in the northern cities. For Milan, for example, see Gioannini and Massobrio, *Bombardate*, 202–03.
45. Philip A. Smith, *Bombing to Surrender: The Contribution of Airpower to the Collapse of Italy, 1943* (Maxwell AFB, AL, 1998), 7, emphasis added.
46. Legation [Berne] to Hull, 27 November 1942.
47. See Kertzer, *Pope and Mussolini*, especially 403–07, 434, 548, 785–93.
48. On Brindisi, see 'I bombardamenti del novembre 1941', http://www.brindisiweb.it/storia/bombardamenti_nov1941.asp; on Naples, Gribaudi, *Guerra totale*, 56–58.
49. Kertzer, *Pope and Mussolini*, 147.

50. Farinacci's article (15 November 1942) is translated and quoted in Harrison to Hull, 23 November 1942, MTP Bombing of Rome.
51. Article (22 November 1942) translated and quoted in Ready to Cicognani, 23 November 1942, Ibid.
52. American Legation [Berne] to Hull, 21 November 1942, Ibid.
53. Ciano diary, in Mancini, *Guerra*, 49n121.
54. Ibid. See also 'Guerra e Pace – La missione Myron Charles Taylor – 1940/41/42', http://digilander.libero.it/lacorsainfinita/guerra2/41/lamissionetaylor.htm; Curtiss and Stewart, 'Taylor', Part 2, 9.
55. Halifax to Taylor, 6 November 1942, with attachment, 'Air Raid Damage to Churches', MTP Bombing of Rome.
56. Cicognani to Taylor, 8 December 1942, conveys greetings from a few days before from Maglione in Rome; it does not mention Taylor's letter of the day before or the document: Ibid.
57. Taylor [telephone] to Roosevelt, 30 November 1942, Ibid.
58. Roosevelt to Taylor, December 1942 [no specific date], Ibid. Cf. Roosevelt memorandum, 1 December instructing Hull to prepare a response to Taylor, Hull draft, 3 December, *Foreign Relations of the United States* [*FRUS], diplomatic papers, 1942, Europe*, Volume III (Washington, DC, 1942), Documents 680, 681.
59. www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/open-city.
60. Ehlers, *Mediterranean Air War*.
61. Baldoli, 'I bombardamenti', 36.
62. Mancini, *Guerra*, 42–43.
63. Harrison memorandum to Hull, 5 December 1942, MTP Bombing of Rome.
64. Taylor to Hull, 12 December 1942, Ibid.
65. Cigognani to Taylor, 15 December 1942, with attached memorandum, Ibid.
66. Hull 'Memorandum of Conversation', 21 December 1942, *FRUS 1942*, III, 797–98.
67. Halifax to Hull, 22 December 1942, Ibid., 798–99.
68. Taylor, 'Memorandum for the Record', 11 June1943, MTP Bombing Rome.
69. Cicognani to Taylor, 25 June 1943, Ibid.
70. Cicognani to Taylor, 28 June 1943, Ibid. Indeed the Axis Powers did later bomb the Vatican – on 5 November 1943 – and tried to blame the British; the organiser of the attack was Farinacci, who also suspected Taylor of receiving intelligence from the Vatican. See Patricia M. McGoldrick, 'Who Bombed the Vatican? The Argentinean Connection', *Catholic Historical Review*, 102/4(2016), 796; Alessandrini, Raffaele. 'Bombe in Vaticano', *L'Osservatore Romano* (10–11 January 2011).
71. Cicognani to Taylor, 28 June 1943, MTP Bombing Rome.
72. Taylor to Roosevelt, 28 June 1943, Ibid. – emphasis added.
73. Taylor, 'Memorandum for the Secretary', 9 July 1943, ibid.
74. Ibid.
75. If Taylor studied the laws of war, the likeliest sources would have been two widely used volumes, still in Cornell's Law Library: George Breckenridge Davis, *Outlines of International Law, with an account of its origin and sources and of its historical development* (NY, 1887); Henry Wager Halleck, *Elements of International Law and Laws of War* (Philadelphia, PA, 1874). In his section on 'The Attack of Places', Davis writes, 'a distinction is made between forts or fortified places, and what are called open, or undefended towns. The latter, if they offer no resistance, cannot be attacked': 219.
76. Umberto Barbisan, *Il crollo della diga di Pian del Gleno: errore tecnico?* (Cavriana, 2007).

77. Giovanni Ruggeri and Sergio Adami, "Lo sviluppo dell'energia idroelettrica in Italia," *L'Acqua* 6 (2011), 69–78.
78. Henry Shue, 'Force Protection, Military Advantage, and "Constant Care" for Civilians: The 1991 Bombing of Iraq', in Evangelista and Shue, *American Way*, Chapter 7.
79. Ruggeri and Adami, 'Lo sviluppo', 72.
80. See Richard Tregaskis, *Invasion Diary* (NY, 1944), 160.
81. Luigi Ceffa, *Dalla Bayard alla Frecciarossa: breve storia delle ferrovie in Italia, 1839–2011* (2011), 10: https://www.3rotaie.it/3r_Documenti/Ferrovie_Italia.htm; Emilio Maraini, 'L'elettrificazione delle ferrovie italiane. Una storia di coraggiosa intraprendenza e di incapacità a seguire una coerente politica industrial', in Stefano Maggi, *Le Ferrovie* (Bologna, 2003), 229; Gabriele Branca, 'La trazione elettrica nelle ferrovie italiane: la fase sperimentale – parte seconda' (nd): http://www.consted.com/doc2008/storia-della-trazione-elettrica-parte-II.asp; Mario Pietrangeli, *Le ferrovie militarizzate i treni armati i treni ospedale nella prima e seconda guerra mondiale 1915–1945* (Edizione, 2012), 35–36, 44.
82. Solly Zuckerman, *From Apes to Warlords* (NY, 1978).
83. Edith C. Rodgers, *The Reduction of Pantelleria and Adjacent Islands, 8 May-14 June 1943*, Army Air Forces Historical Studies, No. 52 (May 1947); Smith, *Bombing to Surrender*.
84. The debate became public with the response to Zuckerman's autobiography. See C.P. Kindleberger, "World War II Strategy," *Encounter* 51, no. 5 (1978): 39–42; Lord Zuckerman, 'Bombs & Illusions in World War II', and C.P. Kindleberger, 'A Rejoinder', Ibid, 52, no. 6 (1979): 86–89; W.W. Rostow, 'The Controversy over World War II Bombing: A Reply to Lord Zuckerman by Walt W. Rostow', Ibid., 55, no. 2-3 (1980): 100–02.
85. Henry D. Lytton, "Bombing Policy in the Rome and Pre-Normandy Campaigns: Bridge-Bombing Strategy Vindicated – and Railyard-Bombing Strategy Invalidated," *Military Affairs* 47, no. 2 (1983): 53–58. However, destroying bridges was no panacea, as the Germans usually repaired them in less than a week. Cf. 57th Bombardment Wing, United States 12th Air Force, *Battle of the Brenner*, nd [but before May 1945].
86. Brookes, *Air War*, 125.
87. "Roosevelt's Note to the Pope," *NY Times*, July 10, 1943.
88. Smith, *Bombing to Surrender*, 38. Baldoli, 'Bombing the Eternal City', 13, quotes the 9th United States Air Force mission report.
89. "321 Bombs Italy First," *321 in the News*, July 19, 1943, 5: http://www.warwingsart.com/12thAirForce/spinglerheadlines.html; Lt. William T. Williams' Flight Log, Part 1, 19 July 1943, http://www.warwingsart.com/12thAirForce/spinglerwilliams1.html.
90. Drew Middleton, "Rail Centres Hit," *NY Times*, July 20, 1943.
91. Herbert L. Matthews, 'Damage to Shrines is Kept to a Minimum', Ibid. (21 July 1943).
92. Ibid.
93. Harold Callender, 'Hull Emphasizes Care in Rome Raid', Ibid. (20 July 1943).
94. Smith, *Bombing to Surrender*, 40.
95. Gioannini and Massobrio, *Bombardate*, 261. The bombing and its commemoration are addressed in a documentary by David Forgacs, *San Lorenzo: Luoghi e memoria* (2005); Maddalena Carli, "Roma, le celebrazioni del bombardamento del 19 luglio 1943 e la memoria della guerra aerea," *Storiografia* 17 (2013), 229–46; John Foot, *Italy's Divided Memory* (London, 2011), Chapter 5; Alessandro Portelli, "Perchè ci ammazzano? Ambiguità e contraddizioni nella memoria dei bombardamenti," *Roma moderna e contemporanea*, special issue, *Roma in guerra 1940–1943* 3 (2003)" 649–70;

Maria Ferretti, "Mémoires divisées. Résistance et guerre aux civils en Italie," *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales* 2005, no. 3 (2005): 627–51.

96. "San Lorenzo: I bombardamenti del 19 luglio 1943," https://www.vivisanlorenzo.it/bombardamenti_del_19_luglio_1943_a_san_lorenzo.htm. The initial reports indicate, '700 civilians were killed and 1500 injured': Tittmann, *Inside the Vatican*, 166. But the numbers were much larger. As part of the 2003 commemoration of the bombing, a memorial was constructed listing the first and last names of 1,492 victims whom researchers managed to identify as killed in the attack: Carli, 'Roma, le celebrazioni', 239.
97. Brookes, *Air War*, 142.
98. Everett B. Thomas, *'Round the World with the 488th: A more or less factual narrative supported by on-the-spot pictorial evidence* (1946), 61, Sidney Schneider Papers, Division of Rare and Manuscript Collections, Cornell University Library, Ithaca, NY.
99. Mancini, *Guerra*, 112–15. Tillmann, *Inside the Vatican*, 140, described a report that 'an American pilot flying low over the outskirts of Naples, had deliberately machine-gunned civilians, particularly a bus filled with labourers'. The practice of strafing Italian civilians continued throughout the war even after the Italians surrendered. For example, Iris Origo, *War in Val d'Orcia: An Italian War Diary, 1943–1944* (Boston, MA, 1984), 167; Thomas, *'Round the World*, 116.
100. Callender, 'Hull Emphasizes Care'.
101. Smith, *Bombing to Surrender*, 30–32.
102. Mancini, *Guerra*, 122–24.
103. "San Lorenzo Holds Mass," *NY Times*, August 13, 1943.
104. Smith, *Bombing to Surrender*, 61; Baldoli, 'Bombing the Eternal City'.
105. Lafirenze, Bombing list; Baldoli, 'Bombing the Eternal City', 10.
106. Tittmann, *Inside the Vatican*, 179–80; Gentiloni Silveri and Carli, *Bombardare Roma*, 104; Lafirenze, Bombing list; Overy, *Bombing War*, 1915.
107. Cicognani to Taylor, 16 August 1943, MTP Bombing Rome.
108. Samuele Schaerf, *Memorie di Samuele Schaerf* (unpublished, 1946), 32. Courtesy of Carlo Schaerf.
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112. Mancini, *Guerra*, 20.
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114. Ibid., 87.
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116. Smith, *Bombing to Surrender*, 56.
117. Gentiloni Silveri and Carli, *Bombardare Roma*, 104–05, Tittmann, *Inside the Vatican*, 180–85.
118. Atkinson, *Day of Battle*; John Grigg, *1943: The Victory That Never Was* (NY, 1980); Istituto centrale di statistica, *Morti e dispersi per cause belliche negli anni 1940–45* (Rome, 1957), 5, https://ebiblio.istat.it/digibib/Cause%20di%20morte/IST3413mortiedispersipercausebellicheanni1940_45+OCRottimizz.pdf.
119. Report reprinted in Gentiloni Silveri and Carli, *Bombardare Roma*, 175–77.
120. Tittman, *Inside the Vatican*, 99–200.

121. Johan Ickx, 'The Bombing of Castel Gandolfo and the Quest for Reparation', *L'Osservatore Romano* [English edition] (4 September 2013), 12.

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Notes on contributor

Matthew Anthony Evangelista is President White Professor of History and Political Science in the Department of Government, Cornell University, where he teaches courses in international and comparative politics. He has been a visiting scholar at Harvard, Stanford, the Brookings Institution, and the European University Institute in Florence, and a visiting professor at the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore in Milan, Università di Bologna, and Università di Roma Tre. Professor Evangelista is the author of five books and editor or co-editor of seven others, including *The American Way of Bombing: Changing Ethical and Legal Norms, from Flying Fortresses to Drones* (2014). His current research interests include international humanitarian law, separatist movements, gender and conflict, and Italy during World War II.