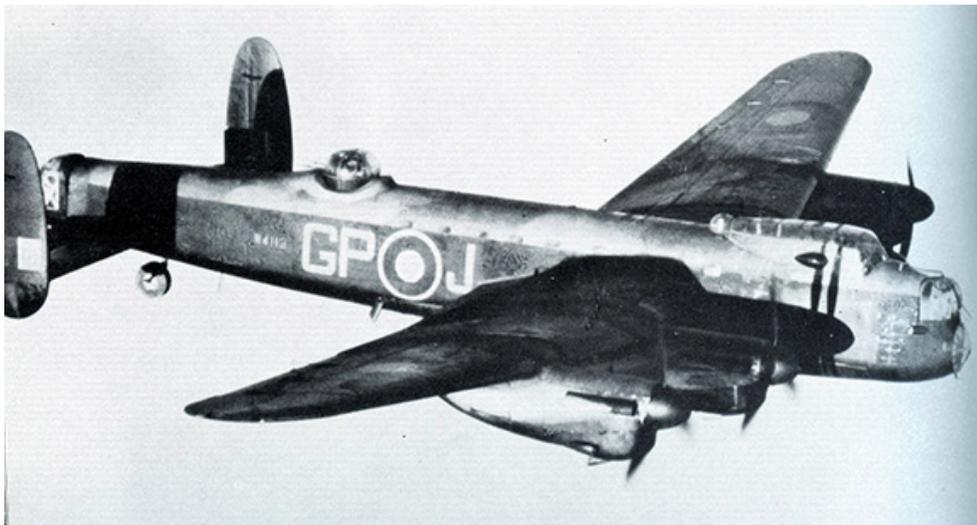


# HACKING – THE PRECURSOR



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Today, we are, pretty much, dependent upon computers for so much of our lives, they look after the power supply, the dissemination of information, banking, finance, the food supply, how cars' engines are governed, in fact, any darned thing that you can think of.

Of course, it's all subject to hacking, that mysterious world of supposed ne'er do wells, who spend their lives trying to inconvenience the general public, and even whole governments, by breaking into other people's accounts and holding people to ransom.

I wonder, when computers were being sold to a somewhat gullible public, if anyone pointed out how vulnerable these systems could be to concerted attack. Perhaps the people who ran computer companies never thought back, or even knew(?) about what happened in the Second World War in the night bombing campaign of Germany?

By 1943, Bomber Command in Britain, was introducing the then new Avro Lancaster and Handley Page Halifax four-engined bombers, to accompany the aging Short Stirling on their nightly bombing raids of the Third Reich. German night fighters, fitted with forward looking "Lichtenstein" radar sets, were already taking a dreadful toll of the big bombers and so British scientists set to, to find a method of jamming the German night fighters' radar sets.

They came up with "Monica", a tail warning radar set that would set off a piercing whine in the headphones of a bomber pilot, once a German night fighter's radar had locked on to him. The trouble was, the Germans swiftly discovered (probably from a "Monica" set in a shot down bomber) that they could tune their FuG 227 radar detection sets to the wavelength of "Monica", and simply home into a bomber without looking for the actual aircraft!

Luckily, one scientist who worked for Bomber Command quickly realized what was happening and told his bosses. They didn't believe him. So, the next time a big bomber raid went out from England, our scientist took a Monica radar set home, waited until the early hours of the next morning, when the British bombers would be returning to their aerodromes, and switched it on. At that time, the Germans were very adept at letting their night fighters act as intruders over Britain, shooting down bombers as they were coming in to land. At around 4 a.m., said scientist called the British Air Ministry to report that he "had two Messerschmitt 110 night fighters orbiting the bottom of my garden!" Of course, said night fighters thought they were following a returning British bomber and must have been very puzzled when it didn't move.

Then there was "window", strips of aluminum foil, dropped by the bombers, that was the length of the wavelength that the German radar operated on. The Germans had to re-calibrate their radar to get around that problem. There was also "Gee" navigation system and "H2S", effectively radar bombsights for bombing through cloud cover. Again, the Germans used their own electronics to attempt to counter these.

So it must have been easy for the inventors and developers of computers to foresee what was going to happen with the introduction of computers but somehow, hacking seems to have caught them unawares. I wonder why...

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