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Hitler's Pre-Emptive War: The Battle for Norway, 1940

Henrik O. Lunde

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A thorough examination of one of history's revolutionary campaigns . . .
After Hitler conquered Poland, and while still fine-tuning his plans against France, the British began to exert control of the coastline of neutral Norway, an action that threatened to cut off Germany's iron-ore conduit to Sweden and outflank from the start its hegemony on the Continent.

The Germans quickly responded with a dizzying series of assaults, using every tool of modern warfare developed in the previous generation. Airlifted infantry, mountain troops and paratroopers were dispatched to the Scandinavian nation, seizing Norwegian strong points while forestalling larger but more cumbersome Allied units.

The German navy also set sail, taking a brutal beating at the hands of Britannia, while ensuring with its sacrifice that key harbors could be held open for resupply. As dive bombers soared overhead, small but elite German units traversed forbidding terrain to ambush Allied units trying to forge inland. At Narvik, some 6,000 German troops battled 20,000 French and British, until the Allies were finally forced to withdraw by the great disaster in France, which had then get underway.

As a veritable coda to the campaign, the aircraft carrier Glorious, while trying to sail back to Britain, was hammered under the waves by the German battle cruiser Scharnhorst.
The air, airborne, sea, amphibious, infantry, armor and commando aspects of this brief but violent campaign are here covered in meticulous detail. Henrik Lunde, a native Norwegian and former U.S. Special Operations colonel, has written perhaps the most objective account to date of a campaign in which 20th century military innovation found its first fertile playing field.

REVIEWS

"While it's almost impossible to find a new book about a hitherto unexplored WWII-related subject, it's almost as unlikely to discover a new book that turns out to be the best yet written on the topic. . . . Henrik Lunde's new Hitler's Pre-Emptive War is certainly not the first book about the 1940 invasion of Norway and the battles around Narvik, but it sure looks like the best."
?Stone & Stone Second World War Books

"Lunde has thoroughly dissected both ground and naval battles and managed to make a complex politico-military situation clear. . . . military collections will want to acquire this excellent effort . . ."
?Library Journal

"Well written with an unbiased eye. . . . Every aspect is covered, with British, French, German and Norwegian viewpoints, decisions and actions all being taken fairly into account. . . . It's an interesting story and one I would recommend."
? Military Modeling, 06/2009

"..a detailed, well laid out history… essential reading; a must-have in your military library and a job very well done by the author."

Military Model Craft International, 07/2009

“This large book will fuel debate. . . . Exhaustive research and intellectual detachment enable the author to bring objectivity and a fresh interpretation to a subject that has been until now laden with national self-justification. . . . Holds the reader’s interest while progressing seamlessly from political and strategic decisions to theater operations and tactics of the various national forces engaged, including describing and analyzing combat on land, at sea, and in the air. . . . This book is a gem.”
?Parameters

“…an excellent job of compiling research material, which can be quite challenging due to the bias of what’s out there…tough to put down…well written and thoroughly researched.”
Internet Modeler, 08/2009

“Thoroughly researched, objective and thoughtfully written… a highly recommended addition to the historiography of World War II, and sheds new light on this misunderstood campaign.”
Carlo D’Este, World War II Magazine, 11/2009

“A very detailed look at what was the first “joint” operation of the Second World War, the highly risky and amazingly successful German invasion of Normandy in April 1940…a comprehensive account of what was one of the most complex campaigns of the war…”
The NYMAS Review, Fall-Winter 2009

“..will undoubtedly become recognized as a milestone among the books about Norway in 1940.”
MILITÄR HISTORIA 3/2009 (Norway)

“…a solid account of the campaign that is both informative and readable, with a focus on military operations that include German, British, French and Norwegian.”
War Books Review, 02/16/2011

“…a well documented, critical and hard hitting analysis of the war in Norway.”
CyberModeler.com

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