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GERMAN OPERATIONS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN; THE "GOEBEN" AND  
"BRESLAU" AND DARDANELLES IN THE WORLD WAR

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STUDY OF THE MAJOR NAVAL OPERATIONS CONDUCTED  
BY THE GERMANS IN THE WORLD WAR.  
THE ESCAPE OF THE GOEBEN AND BRESLAU.

(a) A brief narrative of events.

The GOEBEN and BRESLAU, under the command of Admiral Souchon, were operating in the MEDITERRANEAN prior to the outbreak of the World War; it had been intended that these vessels should operate with the AUSTRIAN fleet out of the ADRIATIC. The GOEBEN was a battle cruiser of 22,640 tons with ten 11"-50 caliber, and ten 5"9-45 caliber guns; her designed speed was 27 knots. The BRESLAU was a light cruiser of 4550 tons with twelve 4"1 guns and 25.5 knots.

The three BRITISH battle cruisers, INFLEXIBLE, INDOMITABLE, and INDEFATIGABLE, displaced about 18,000 tons each, with eight 12" guns and 25 knots speed; the BRITISH light cruisers, except GLOUCESTER, were superior in gun power, but with a half knot less speed than the BRESLAU; the GLOUCESTER was slightly inferior in fighting strength to the BRESLAU. The four armored cruisers were very much inferior in speed and fighting strength to the GOEBEN.

The GERMAN squadron fueled at BRINDISI on 1 August and sailed for MESSINA, arriving there on 2 August when the GOEBEN again fueled. Admiral Souchon left MESSINA early Monday morning, 3 August, and stood away, undetected, to the westward along the north coast of SICILY, in order that he might be in a position to hamper the FRENCH troop movements from ALGERIA when war was declared. At 6 pm that day he heard that war was declared between GERMANY and FRANCE; he also received instructions to proceed with his squadron to CONSTANTINOPELE.

His orders to CONSTANTINOPELE were of "extreme urgency" but he decided to continue with the present venture, and so, at daylight the next day, 4 August, his vessels bombarded

BONA and PHILIPPEVILLE, but did little damage. After a feint at making off to the westward, the GERMANS headed east, and at 10.30 am they encountered the BRITISH battle cruisers INDOMITABLE and INDEFATIGABLE which were making for GIBRALTAR at high speed. ENGLAND and GERMANY were still at peace, but the BRITISH had instructions to shadow the GOEBEN, and accordingly the two BRITISH vessels turned and followed the GERMANS to the eastward. No salutes were exchanged. The GERMANS speeded up and began to drop the BRITISH vessels astern; the latter vessels required an overhaul badly and their Engineer complements were undermanned. The DUBLIN came up from BIZERTA during the afternoon and took up the chase; she kept the GERMANS in sight until 10 pm when she lost them off CAPE SAN VITTO on the north coast of SICILY. The Senior Officer Present of the BRITISH squadron planned to follow along and block the north entrance to the STRAIT OF MESSINA but his Commander-in-Chief told him to turn back.

The GERMANS continued on to MESSINA and refueled from a GERMAN liner, THE GENERAL; the BRITISH Commander-in-Chief, Admiral Milne, did not know where the GERMANS were until 5 pm the next day, 5 August.

Admiral Milne had at first been assigned the task of preventing the GERMANS from interfering with the FRENCH troop movements from NORTH AFRICA; in addition he had instructions to (1), watch the ADRIATIC because of the AUSTRIAN fleet there, and (2) not to allow his forces to be brought to action at this stage unless it was in a general engagement in which the FRENCH forces were taking part. After war was declared against GERMANY at midnight, 4 August, he was also assigned the GOEBEN as his objective; none of his previous instructions were either cancelled or modified.

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At this point it should be noted that the FRENCH Commander-in-Chief had suddenly and radically altered his war plans; he divided his fleet into three Convoy Groups to guard his transports instead of allowing them to proceed unguarded and employ the fleet in a covering movement to the eastward as had been originally planned and was so understood by the BRITISH. When the FRENCH Commander heard of the GERMAN raid on BONA and PHILIPPEVILLE he held up the troop movements and disposed a strong force just east of ALGIERS to intercept the GERMANS in case they attempted to escape to the westward. The BRITISH, by the way, neglected for twenty-four hours to inform the FRENCH that the GERMANS had made off to the eastward after the bombardment.

The BRITISH Admiralty and Admiral Milne were totally unaware of the new FRENCH dispositions and no changes were made in the BRITISH objectives; accordingly Admiral Milne adhered to his first task, that is to guard the FRENCH troop movements, and he made his dispositions with that end in view. His strategic attitude and his dispositions however, were distinctly defensive in character; his decision under his mission, was to deny the GERMANS exit into the WESTERN MEDITERRANEAN rather than to locate and to destroy them.

The ADRIATIC was watched by Admiral Troubridge with four armored cruisers and eight destroyers; a light cruiser, the GLOUCESTER, was stationed to watch the southern entrance to the STRAIT OF MESSINA. Admiral Milne himself, with two battle cruisers and two light cruisers, guarded the line, SOUTHERN SARDINIA, WESTERN SICILY, CAPE BON; one battle cruiser, the INDOMITABLE, went into BIZERTA for fuel; one light cruiser, the DUBLIN, went to MALTA to refuel. The northern entrance to the STRAIT OF MESSINA was left unguarded until 6 August after the GERMAN squadron had departed. Admiral Milne has stated that at 5 pm, 5 August, the GERMAN ships were

reported to be fueling at MESSINA. At 6pm, 5 August, the BRITISH Admiralty knew positively that the GERMAN ships were at MESSINA. Only one BRITISH ship, the light cruiser GLOUCESTER, was on guard at MESSINA, and she was not permitted to pass through the STRAIT on account of the ITALIAN neutrality regulations. The next day, 6 August, Admiral Milne decided to take the offensive; he swept eastward along the north coast of SICILY in order to intercept the GERMANS in case they came west along that route. A light cruiser, the CHATHAM was sent ahead at high speed to watch off MESSINA. At 6 pm, when the BRITISH squadron was 30 miles north of MARITTIMO ISLAND, off the west coast of SICILY, and two hundred miles from MESSINA, the GLOUCESTER reported that the GERMANS had been sighted heading south from MESSINA. Admiral Milne then turned back to guard the western passages again. The GERMANS, shortly afterwards, turned away to the north eastward and he was left miles behind.

The GERMAN squadron encountered difficulties in refueling at MESSINA; it was late in the afternoon of 6 August before this operation was completed. In the meanwhile, Admiral Souchon was very uncertain as to his future movements; his orders to CONSTANTINOPLE had been countermanded and he was told to go to POLA or else break into the ATLANTIC. AUSTRIA was not ready to help with her fleet and declined to declare war at that time, and so, the GERMANS could not go to POLA. Admiral Souchon was finally left at liberty to choose his own course; he elected to go to CONSTANTINOPLE.

The GERMANS sailed from MESSINA at 5 pm, 6 August, and headed south until the GLOUCESTER was sighted shortly afterwards, when they turned off to the north eastward, hugging the ITALIAN coast; the GLOUCESTER followed along. At 11 pm they turned off to the south east and laid a course for CAPE MATAPAN in southern GREECE, still followed by the GLOUCESTER. This continued until 1.35 pm the next day, 7 August, when the

BRESLAU tried to crowd the GLOUCESTER astern and shake her off; the GLOUCESTER opened fire on her and a long range action began between the two vessels. The GOEBEN turned to assist her consort which forced the GLOUCESTER to break off the engagement and haul away, but not out of sight, however; she continued to follow when the GERMANS squared away on their course. At 4.40 pm, when off CAPE MATAPAN, the GLOUCESTER gave up the chase; her fuel was running short and Admiral Milne feared for her safety.

The GERMANS continued, unmolested, into the AEGEAN; hardly had they entered it when Admiral Souchon was told not to proceed at once to CONSTANTINOPLE, as the TURKS were making difficulties about allowing him to enter. He cruised slowly eastward during the night of 7-8 August and put in at the ISLAND OF DENUSA the following afternoon to refuel from a collier that had been awaiting him in the vicinity. He remained there until 10 August trying to get in touch with CONSTANTINOPLE, but without success. In the meanwhile, the BRITISH were closing in on him from the westward and he could remain no longer; he sailed at 5.45 am, 10 August, and arrived at the DARDANELLES at 5pm the same day. It is reported that he was determined to force an entrance in to the DARDANELLES if necessary. Fortunately for him, this was not necessary; the TURKS raised no difficulties and he was piloted into the DARDANELLES shortly after his arrival.

When Admiral Milne was informed by the GLOUCESTER that the GERMANS had turned away to the north east, there was nothing for him to do except to follow as best he could; his squadron needed fuel and so he proceeded to MALTA, arriving there about noon 7 August. The INDOMITABLE arrived at MALTA shortly afterwards; she had fueled at BIZERTA, but was not able to take up the chase immediately on account of boiler trouble which required twelve hours repairs. The DUBLIN, with two destroyers, had sailed from MALTA at 2 pm, 6 August, to join the ADRIATIC patrol; she attempted to intercept the GERMANS during the night

of 6-7 August and attack with torpedoes, but she failed to make contact and continued on to her destination.

Admiral Troubridge, with The First Cruiser Squadron, was patrolling off CEPHALONIA when news reached him of the GERMAN departure from MESSINA. He very properly estimated that they were making for the ADRIATIC, so he turned north to intercept them near FANO IS. in the STRAIT OF OTRANTO. Upon hearing that the GERMANS had turned away to the south eastward, he turned south to intercept them at dawn, hoping thereby to engage on more equal terms, since he considered the GERMANS to be superior to him in a daylight action. He was preoccupied with his instruction to avoid engaging a superior force although he had been told that the GOEBEN was his objective. His eight destroyers had joined him, but they were very short of fuel and could not carry on very long. At 3.50 am, 7 August, he saw that he could not possibly make contact by dawn, so he gave up the chase and put into ZANTE to refuel.

Admiral Milne, with three battle cruisers and the WEYMOUTH, sailed from MALTA at 1.00 am, 8 August, for CAPT MATAPAN; the GERMANS had last been seen in that vicinity at 5 pm 7 August, headed eastward at fifteen knots. When he was half way to MATAPAN, at 2.30 pm, 8 August, a message was sent to him, by mistake, from the Admiralty, that war had been declared with AUSTRIA. This change in the situation required that the chase be broken off and his forces concentrated to oppose the AUSTRIAN fleet. He accordingly ordered his fleet concentrated at a point 100 miles south west of CEPHALONIA, and he proceeded with his squadron to that point.

Later on, that day, he was informed that the AUSTRIAN war telegram was a false alarm, but that relations with AUSTRIA were critical; so he continued with his concentration until noon, 9 August, when the Admiralty instructed him to continue with the search for the GOEBEN.

Admiral Milne had lost twenty valuable hours and was far behind the GERMANS. He continued the search, however, and arrive

in the AEGEAN the following morning, 10 August, and was only 100 miles to the west of DENUSA when the GERMAN squadron sailed from there for the DARDANELLES. But he was unaware of this fact. He searched the AEGEAN without success until noon the following day when he was informed that the GERMANS had put into the DARDANELLES the previous evening. He then proceeded to the DARDANELLES and took up a watching position there to prevent the GERMANS from escaping into the MEDITERRANEAN.

At no time during the preceding events did the Admiralty or Admiral Milne have the faintest idea that the GERMANS would make for CONSTANTINOPLE. Apparently the GERMAN-TURKISH intrigue had entirely escaped the notice of the BRITISH diplomats. The BRITISH were continually preoccupied with the conviction that the GERMANS would attempt to escape to the westward or into the ADRIATIC. When the GERMANS finally made off to the eastward, there was some apprehension that they might appear off ALEXANDRIA and the SUEZ CANAL, but the DARDANELLES was considered to be entirely out of the question because of the mines that had been planted there, and because of the neutral attitude of the TURKS.

The GOEBEN and BRESLAU were nominally transferred to the TURKISH navy becoming the SULTAN SELIM and the MIDILLU. On Nov. 18, 1914, the GOEBEN fought an indecisive action with three RUSSIAN pre-dreadnaughts. During this action or shortly afterwards, the GOEBEN was heavily injured by a double mine explosion. The first mine struck the starboard bow over the provision storerooms, shattering the hull from the belt to the docking keel; the second mine exploded on the port side over a coal bunker, disabling the third barbette. It took three months to effect repairs at CONSTANTINOPLE by means of cofferdams. The GOEBEN appears to have been again mined on another date during 1915 or 1916. During 1917 she was again injured by bombs dropped from a BRITISH HANDLEY-PAGE aeroplane during a raid on CONSTANTINOPLE. In January 1918, the GOEBEN and BRESLAU sank the BRITISH monitors RAGLAN and M 28 at IMBROS, but both ships were



mined. The BRESLAU sank, and the GOEBEN was beached near NAGARA PT., where she was repeatedly attacked by bombing planes. An unsuccessful attack was also made by submarines against her. She was towed off, and after the capture of SEVASTOPOL she was taken there to be docked, refitted, overhauled, and to have her boilers retubed. The GOEBEN has probably had more narrow escapes from destruction than any other Dreadnaught or Battle Cruiser in existence; she certainly is a remarkable testimonial to the thorough underwater protection of GERMAN Battleships and Battle Cruisers. Her present condition is very bad, as all but two of her twenty four boilers are out of action, and there are two unrepaired holes in her hull below the waterline.

(b) The purpose of the campaign.

The final purpose of the GERMANS in this campaign was to throw TURKEY into the arms of the CENTRAL POWERS in order that these powers might gain control of the DARDANELLES for the double purpose of isolating RUSSIA from her Allies, and for threatening EGYPT and the ALLIES' far eastern communications.

(c) The strategic planning.

So far as can be ascertained, the GERMANS had no pre-war naval strategic plans in the MEDITERRANEAN other than joining forces with the AUSTRIANS in the ADRIATIC. The main purpose of this campaign was apparently decided upon at the last minute. The plan to bombard BONA and PHILIPPEVILLE was not sound. The results that might have been obtained were totally incommensurate with the risks involved. This venture was carried out by Admiral Souchon in the face of urgent orders to proceed to CONSTANTINOPLE; undoubtedly, he was aware of the purpose behind that movement and was cognizant of the far reaching consequences that might attend failure.

That bombardment did serve one purpose however; it served to keep the BRITISH and FRENCH preoccupied with the idea that the GERMANS intended to operate in the WESTERN MEDITERRANEAN or that they might attempt to escape in that direction, with the result that the eastern routes were lightly guarded which facilitated

the GERMAN movement in that direction.

The strategy involved in sending these two GERMAN warships to CONSTANTINOPLE at that time was masterly. It took the ALLIES completely by surprise which was a great aid towards its successful execution. Their entry into the DARDANELLES was a deciding factor in bringing the TURKS over to the CENTRAL POWERS, besides greatly strengthening the morale and the material of the TURKISH navy. The far reaching results of this strategic planning will be discussed later on.

The strategic plans of the ALLIES, as decided upon before the war, were sound and adequate. But the FRENCH Commander-in-Chief did not adhere to them with the result that tasks were duplicated, the two forces worked at cross purposes, and the main objective of the campaign was obscured. Before the BRITISH declared war on GERMANY, little could be planned except to shadow the GERMAN vessels and to dispose strong BRITISH forces between them and the FRENCH transport routes. After war was declared, and the GOEBEN had been assigned as an objective, the BRITISH Commander remained preoccupied with his first objective, that is, to protect the FRENCH troop movements. His strategic attitude and his plans were decidedly of a defensive character. The GERMANS took the initiative and held it throughout; the BRITISH were continually readjusting their dispositions to meet the GERMAN movements and were always a little too far behind to accomplish anything.

It would appear that Admiral Milne's proper decision, under his mission "to protect the FRENCH troop movements", was, to contain or to destroy the enemy vessels. Such a decision would have given him the initiative and a definite objective. He finally came to this decision but it was too late, the birds had flown and they soon got out of his reach. It is believed that he missed his great opportunity when he failed to bottle up both entrances to the STRAIT OF MESSINA while the GERMAN vessels were fueling there during 5-6 August. He knew that the GERMANS were there at 5 pm, 5 August, and he could have sent a battle cruiser

and a light cruiser to watch each entrance.

When, on 5 August, the INDOMITABLE was sent into BIZERTA to refuel, a defensive strategical disposition to guard the channels to the WESTERN MEDITERRANEAN was indicated. At about the same time, the DUBLIN was sent into MALTA to refuel; this vessel was complete with fuel in time to leave MALTA at 2 pm, 6 August, and to intercept the GERMANS when they turned eastward. An offensive strategic attitude would have sent the INDOMITABLE to MALTA instead of BIZERTA, and the result of the campaign might have been very different.

(d) The tactics involved.

There was only one incident in this campaign where tactics were involved; this was when the GLOUCESTER followed the GOEBEN and BRESLAU from MESSINA to CAPE MATAPAN, keeping the authorities constantly informed of their location and movements, and at the same time, she suffered no damage from the superior forces ahead. Of this incident, Corbett says: "For his conduct throughout the affair he was highly commended by the Admiralty. The GOEBEN, so ran the minute on his report, could have caught and sunk the GLOUCESTER at any time---- she was apparently deterred by the latter's boldness, which gave the impression of support close at hand. The combination of audacity with restraint, unswerving attention to the principal military object, viz holding on to the GOEBEN and strict conformity to orders, constitute a naval episode which may justly be regarded as a model! In endorsement of this judgement, Captain Kelly received the honour of the Companionship of the Bath. His conduct was the one bright spot in the unfortunate episode".

(e) The logistics involved, including the effect of logistics on the operations.

Logistics played a very important part in these operations, and, in each instance, they reacted adversely upon the BRITISH. The three principal elements of logistics that played a part will be discussed separately as follows: one, personnel; two, material, and three, fuel supply.

1. Personnel.

The BRITISH battle cruisers were undermanned at the outbreak of war and especially so in their Engineer Departments, with the result that when sustained high speeds were required, there was not sufficient engineer's force to keep up the pace. This condition enabled the GERMANS to more easily draw away from the BRITISH battle cruisers off BIZERTEA on 4 August. Just prior to the outbreak of war, and when it seemed inevitable, the MEDITERRANEAN was alive with BRITISH merchant shipping with Naval Reservists on board from which their warship's crews could have been replenished.

2. Material.

The GOEBEN had received a thorough overhaul at POLA during the period of strained relations before the war. The BRESLAU was also in excellent condition. This fact enabled the GERMANS to shake off the BRITISH pursuit on 4 August and enter MESSINA undetected, with the result that the BRITISH Commander-in-Chief was unaware of their whereabouts for a period of seventeen hours after war was declared, which was probably a contributing factor in their final escape. It is reported that the GOEBEN did two knots better than her designed speed at that time.

On the other hand, the BRITISH battle cruisers had not been in dock for some time; their bottoms were foul and their machinery was not in the best of condition. The INDOMITABLE had just begun her overhaul at MALTA when war became imminent; she put to sea without repairs and consequently, she was not able to make her designed speed, and was soon left behind whenever high speeds were required. The most serious consequence of that delayed overhaul was yet to come; when she arrived at MALTA at noon on 7 August, and the GERMANS were escaping to the eastward, she was complete with fuel and might have given chase had she not required twelve hours boiler overhaul. It is true that she was then some three hundred miles astern of the enemy,

but a determined pursuit might have accomplished much, especially when it is remembered that the GERMANS tarried for sixty hours in the AEGEAN before proceeding to CONSTANTINOPELE.

3. Fuel supply.

In their logistic arrangements, the GERMANS made good use of their mercantile marine in the MEDITERRANEAN. A GERMAN collier was stationed at MAJORCA in the WESTERN MEDITERRANEAN; the liner "GENERAL" was on hand at MESSINA, and another collier was stationed in the EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN and which was available when it was required. Fuel was also available in the AUSTRIAN ports in the ADRIATIC. These logistic arrangements made it possible for the GERMAN squadron to move either north, east, or west and find fuel en route. It is very probable that this fact had a very considerable bearing in deciding Admiral Souchon to go to CONSTANTINOPELE when he was left at liberty to choose his own course of action; he knew that he could use high speeds in order to escape and at the same time be sure of a sufficient fuel supply after the escape was effected.

On the other hand, it appears that the BRITISH vessels required refueling at every critical moment. The fact that the GERMANS had the initiative and forced their opponents to conform to their movements, is one reason why the BRITISH were always out of step. When the GERMAN squadron sailed from MESSINA on 6 August, the BRITISH battle cruisers needed refueling and could not immediately give chase; the destroyers off the ADRIATIC were very low in fuel at this time, and were of little use. Admiral Milne states that he had considerable difficulty in getting fuel. The GLOUCESTER was compelled to give up the chase of the GOMBEN and BRESLU off CAPE MATAPAN on 7 August because of lack of fuel. The DUBLIN and two destroyers, replete with fuel, had passed her close aboard the night before, but were not assigned to the chase. Had the BRITISH battle cruisers not been compelled to stop at MALTA for fuel, it is possible that they might have discovered the

GERMANS in the AEGEAN and brought them to action.

(f) Conclusions as to the results achieved in comparison with those sought.

It is believed that the results achieved were infinitely greater than those sought. When TURKEY entered the war on the side of the CENTRAL POWERS, the GERMANS gained a far reaching strategical advantage over the ALLIES. At one stroke, RUSSIA was cut off from her allies; her unlimited man power could not be developed, as she needed arms, munitions, and financial support in order to do this. Her grain, which was sorely needed to feed the ALLIES, could not be shipped out and consequently, her financial and economic condition went from bad to worse. Beyond this again was the general question of shipping. The enormous drain which the war was making on the available tonnage was a serious anxiety to the ALLIES, and in the RUSSIAN BLACK SEA ports were locked up no fewer than 129 steamships, ALLIED, neutral, and interned enemy, with an aggregate of nearly 350,000 tons gross.

The fact that the CENTRAL POWERS controlled CONSTANTINOPIE finally induced BULGARIA to enter the war on their side. This circumstance hastened the fall of SERBIA, which fact gave the CENTRAL POWERS an uninterrupted line of communication to the BOSPORUS and on to EGYPT and the INDIAN OCEAN. EGYPT and INDIA were threatened; the RUSSIAN control over the BLACK SEA was weakened; the ALLIES were compelled to divert an appreciable amount of their naval and military strength to guard their eastern lines of communication, and their disastrous attempt to retake the DARDANELLES was terribly costly in men, money, and material, in addition to destroying a considerable amount of their prestige and self confidence.

Finally, the GERMAN control of the BOSPORUS denied to the ALLIES the opportunity to surround the CENTRAL POWERS with a ring of steel and cut them off from spreading the war effectively beyond the confines of EUROPE.

(f) 2. Were the paramount principles selected and correctly applied?

The principle of the objective will be considered first.

The strategical objective of the GERMAN GOVERNMENT was the control of CONSTANTINOPIE together with the DARDANELLES and the BOSPORUS, and, since that government believed that the presence of Admiral Souchon's squadron at CONSTANTINOPIE would lead to the attainment of its objective, then Admiral Souchon's proper objective was to place his vessels quickly and safely inside the DARDANELLES. He failed to apply correctly the principle of the objective when, after having received urgent orders to proceed to CONSTANTINOPIE, he stood on to bombard BONA and PHILIPPEVILLE. In temporarily losing sight of his proper objective, he subjected his command to possible damage or destruction at the hands of the FRENCH fleet, in order to carry on with a venture of very doubtful value.

After that, however, he held to his objective with audacity and restraint; he sailed boldly out of MESSINA and headed for CONSTANTINOPIE when he had every reason to believe that the BRITISH fleet was concentrated in his path, and he refrained from being drawn into an engagement with the GLOUCESTER until his escape was practically assured, although he could have sunk that vessel at any time. When he was at DENUSA, awaiting permission to enter the DARDANELLES, and the BRITISH began to close in on him, he again displayed audacity and tenacity of purpose by deciding to proceed boldly to the DARDANELLES AND DEMAND ADMITTANCE, determined to force an entrance if necessary.

When he was fueling at MESSINA on 5-6 August, his orders to CONSTANTINOPIE were countermanded and he was told to go to POIA else break into the ATLANTIC; finally he was left at liberty to choose his own course of action, and he chose to go to the DARDANELLES. This was a rare exhibition of judgement and tenacity of purpose. He knew that the FRENCH were in force to the westward and that GIBRALTAR would be strongly held against him. Even

if he did succeed in escaping into the ATLANTIC, his vessels would probably be damaged while doing so, and the chances were that he would eventually be hunted down and destroyed after doing some damage in the ALLIED shipping lanes. If he went to POLA he would be trapped in the ADRIATIC by the superior BRITISH and FRENCH forces, and he would be impotent for the remainder of the war. He believed that strong BRITISH forces barred his escape to the ADRIATIC or to the eastward. His situation appeared to be hopeless any way he turned. He finally decided to adopt that objective which, if successful, would gain the greatest advantage for the GERMAN cause. History has vindicated his judgement and applauded his boldness.

During the first phase of this campaign, the BRITISH application of the principle of the objective does not appear to have been entirely correct. A multiplicity of objectives were assigned by the Admiralty to Admiral Milne.

The GERMAN vessels were to be prevented from interfering with the transport of the FRENCH AFRICAN ARMY and from leaving the MEDITERRANEAN by way of GIBRALTAR.

The ADRIATIC was to be watched to prevent the GERMAN vessels from entering and also that the AUSTRIAN fleet might not leave it undetected.

The GOMBEN and BRESLAU were to be prevented from interfering with trade in the EASTERN BASIN OF THE MEDITERRANEAN.

The possibility that ITALY would join the CENTRAL POWERS was to be borne in mind.

The neutrality of ITALY was to be rigidly respected, no belligerent warship was to go within six miles of the ITALIAN coast.

There were thus imposed upon Admiral Milne four objectives, one contingency, and one limitation. In addition to the above, he was instructed not to accept action with a superior force unless in a general engagement in which the FRENCH were taking part.



After war was declared, the GOEBEN was added to Admiral Milne's long list of objectives. None of the others were either cancelled or modified.

Admiral Milne seems to have been preoccupied with his mission of guarding the FRENCH troop movements to the neglect of what is believed to have been his primary objective after war had been declared, i.e., to contain or destroy the GERMAN vessels. The BRITISH Admiralty seems to have been likewise preoccupied. This opinion is based on the fact that no attempt was made to bottle those vessels in MESSINA while they were fueling there on 5-6 August. Admiral Milne knew at 5pm, and the Admiralty at 6 pm, on 5 August that those vessels were fueling at MESSINA. They remained at MESSINA for thirty six hours. From his position at the time, Admiral Milne could have placed a strong force at each entrance to the STRAIT OF MESSINA before the GERMANS departed and thus insured bringing them to action. Such a decision would have supported each of his missions that concerned the GOEBEN and BRESLAU.

The principle of the offensive.

The GERMAN Commander correctly applied this principle in that he seized the initiative from the start; he boldly sailed for his destination no matter what odds were in his path. His mission did not permit him to seek an action with the enemy; on the contrary he very wisely declined to make an easy prey of the GLOUCESTER since it would unnecessarily delay him and would not add materially to the accomplishment of his mission.

The BRITISH, on the other hand, adopted a decidedly defensive attitude. Every disposition that Admiral Milne made was intended to prevent the GERMANS from accomplishing some particular purpose. He made a belated offensive movement on the morning of 6 August when he started for MESSINA with the intention of encountering the GERMANS as they came west from there; he assumed that they would respect ITALIAN neutrality and would refrain from using the STRAIT OF MESSINA.

It is believed that it would have been proper for him to have assumed the offensive the previous afternoon, upon learning that his enemies were at MESSINA, and to have made them his immediate objective. This action would have given him the initiative and permitted him to hold it until the end. As it was, he never gained the initiative at all with the result that he had to conform his every action to those of the GERMANS.

#### THE PRINCIPLE OF CO-OPERATION.

This principle was emphasized by its almost total neglect; in the first place, during the days of strained relations that immediately preceded the war, the BRITISH Admiralty failed to get in touch with the Naval Authorities at PARIS, and the FRENCH likewise failed to get in touch with the BRITISH. On 7 April, 1914, the BRITISH and FRENCH agreed upon a joint war plan in the MEDITERRANEAN in case of war with the CENTRAL POWERS which might also include ITALY. Under this plan, the FRENCH troop transports from NORTH AFRICA were to proceed unguarded to FRANCE while the whole FRENCH fleet was to seek out the enemy to the eastward, thus covering the transit of the troops. The BRITISH were to follow the general plan as outlined in Admiral Milne's instructions.

The two Commanders-in-Chief had neither met nor conferred in any way.

The FRENCH fleet put to sea at 4 am on 3 August, but, instead of following the plan as outlined above, the Commander-in-Chief decided at the last minute that it would be safer to convoy his transports, and so he split his fleet into three convoy groups and sent them to the ports of embarkation. When the news of the attack on BONA reached him, he dispatched a strong squadron of battleships, cruisers, and destroyers to CAPE MATIFOU, just to the eastward of ALGIERS, to bar the GERMAN escape to the ATLANTIC. Thus there was no reason for Admiral Milne to be concerned over the FRENCH troop movements nor over the GERMANS escaping into the ATLANTIC.

Byt the FRENCH MINISTRY OF MARINE did not inform the BRITISH Admiralty of the new FRENCH dispositions that had been made on 4 August; the result was duplication of tasks and much working at cross purposes.

It was 24 hours before the FRENCH Commander-in-Chief knew that the GOEBEN and BRESLAU had made off to the eastward after bombarding BONA. The BRITISH either neglected or were unable, because of poor communications, to inform the FRENCH Admiral of that important event, with the result that the FRENCH troop movements were greatly delayed.

Important political information was withheld from both Commanders-in-Chief, and other political information reached them too late to be advantageously used.

The principle of the economy of force; this principle, correctly applied, aids in carrying out the principle of the objective, and the principle of security, and the principle of superiority. In this campaign, the principle of economy of force was incorrectly applied due to the failure of the two Admiralties to apply the principle of co-operation. At a critical moment, the main strengths of the two fleets were devoted to one objective, whereas the FRENCH fleet alone was more than sufficient to accomplish that mission. The unnecessary inclusion of the BRITISH battle cruisers in this task denied to them the unobstructed pursuit of their proper objective, that is, the GERMAN vessels themselves. Admiral Milne would thus have been able to dispose his forces, in superiority, at the two entrances of the STRAIT OF MESSINA, and he could have at least applied correctly one of the elements of the principle of security, that is, the GERMANS could not have surprised him by making off unobstructed toward CONSTANTINOPIE.

The principle of movement.

The GERMANS applied this principle correctly when they located their colliers in the EASTERN, CENTRAL, and WESTERN MEDITERRANEAN. When Admiral Souchon, on 5-6 August, was left

at liberty to choose his route, north, east, or west, he was probably influenced in choosing the most advantageous course of action, that is, to go to CONSTANTINOPIE, because of the fact that fuel awaited him in the AEGEAN. He could thus expend large quantities of fuel in escaping at high speeds and still be assured of a sufficient supply enroute to enable him to carry on to his objective.

On 5 August, after the GERMAN vessels had eluded the pursuing BRITISH battle cruisers and had made MESSINA, Admiral Milne still considered his mission to be to bar their escape into the WESTERN MEDITERRANEAN. Consequently, since the INDOMITABLE required fuel, he sent her into BIZERTA to coal in order to keep his force concentrated on the line that he intended to defend. This was a correct application of the principle of movement under his mission.

The principle of security.

Security in general, embraces all measures taken by a command to protect itself from observation, surprise, and annoyance by the enemy, and to obtain for itself the necessary freedom of action.

Admiral Souchon failed to correctly apply this principle when he bombarded BONA and PHILIPPEVILLE on 4 August; war had been declared against FRANCE the day before and he was expecting war with ENGLAND at any time; he had received extremely urgent orders to proceed to CONSTANTINOPIE; the MEDITERRANEAN was closely watched by BRITISH and FRENCH warships and his principal element of security was secrecy. At the time of the bombardment ~~his~~ location and movements were entirely unknown to his enemies and it is possible that he could have eluded the BRITISH forces to the eastward of him and have reached his destination undetected. As it turned out, his location was known at daylight 4 August; shortly afterwards he ran into two BRITISH battle cruisers which were searching for him and only the fact that ENGLAND had delayed going to war saved him from certain destruction or

severe damage. His superior speed enabled him to shake off his pursuers, but the consequent large fuel consumption compelled him to put into MESSINA to refuel before proceeding eastward; he encountered difficulties in refueling at MESSINA and had to remain there for thirty-six hours which was ample time for his enemies to have penned him in and have insured his certain capture or destruction.

Their failure to do this, however, was for him a fortunate blunder on the part of his enemies, and he took full advantage of it. The GOEBEN made her way, unobstructed, to CONSTANTINOPLE, carrying with her for the peoples of the EAST and the MIDDLE EAST more slaughter, more misery and more ruin than has ever before been borne within the compass of a ship.