

1977

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### Recommended Citation

Philbin, Tobias R. III (1977) "Reflections on the Strategy of a Continental Commander: Admiral Franz Hipper on Naval Warfare," *Naval War College Review*: Vol. 30 : No. 4 , Article 6.  
Available at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol30/iss4/6>

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*There are many similarities in the strategic position of Germany before 1914 and the Soviet Union today. Analogy is no substitute for analysis, but insight into past events can educate our minds—and those of our potential enemies as well—so that we are better able to gain wise and valid insights into current and future situations. The strategic concepts of Adm. Franz Hipper of the Imperial German Navy deserve examination, even though history can only illustrate, never prove a point.*

## **REFLECTIONS ON THE STRATEGY OF A CONTINENTAL COMMANDER: ADMIRAL FRANZ HIPPER ON NAVAL WARFARE**

by

Tobias R. Philbin III

In the course of the 20th century, the United States has supplanted the British Empire as the world's premier island-based seapower and the Soviet Union has taken Germany's position as the first-rank naval power of the Eurasian landmass. For this reason an appreciation of the position of a continental-based naval commander is as important today as it was at the turn of the century. There is widespread belief that the present age with its nuclear weaponry, ease of communication and sophisticated technology is unique. Yet two factors—geography and national outlook—are as critical now as they were when Germany and England contested mastery of the oceans.

The strategic problems facing the present Soviet admiral commanding the Northern Fleet and those Adm. Franz

Hipper faced two generations ago are similar: a mission of sea denial; natural obstacles in achieving the open sea; national priorities assigning the premier position to land forces; and a desire for seapower to ensure world-power status. In addition, it is worthwhile to examine Hipper's thoughts on naval warfare in World War I because they cast fresh light on the origins of German naval strategy in World War II.

Franz Hipper served in the Kaiser's navy from 1889 to 1918. He is largely remembered for his brilliant performance at Jutland. What he is not remembered for and what may be far more significant historically is his plan for commerce warfare or a "war of sea denial," in today's vernacular. In fact, a case can be made that if Hipper's plan had been followed and his overall

strategy adopted, World War I could have ended in late 1915 with a German victory.

**Hipper and the Planning of Commerce Warfare.** Hipper's approach to commerce warfare was delineated in an operations plan<sup>1</sup> submitted to the High Seas Fleet Commander, Adm. Friedrich von Ingenohl, in November 1914. There was much uncertainty in the German Navy concerning the type of naval strategy to be followed,<sup>2</sup> especially from the beginning of World War I in August 1914 to the commencement of the first U-boat campaign in 1915. Some operations were undertaken with the fleet, cruiser warfare was carried on by a few ships overseas; and there were individual U-boat victories. However, in the main theater the Germans did not readily divine the implications of the British strategy of distant blockade and initially they interpreted the British operations as deliberate evasion of action.<sup>3</sup> This situation gave rise to a debate among German naval commanders over two basic strategies: *Kleinkrieg* and *Grosskrieg*. The first called for a *guerre de course* or raiding of commerce and included U-boat warfare; the second for an attack by the German battle fleet upon the British Grand Fleet. Use of the battle fleet applied to the second strategy even if commerce raiding were the mission assigned.

**Hipper's Strategy.** Hipper's approach lay between these two strategic concepts and involved use of part of the High Seas Fleet for a war on commerce. Acting on an idea proposed by one of his battle-cruiser commanders, Hipper wrote an operations plan advocating the use of Germany's entire battle-cruiser force in the Atlantic. Hipper's plan was to take his five capital ships (*Derfflinger*, *Moltke*, *Seydlitz*, *von der Tann* and *Blücher*) north around the Shetlands, past Iceland, then southwest,

raiding Canadian ports and proceeding south along the U.S. coast to sink British cruisers and shipping off U.S. ports and finally to link up with Adm. Count von Spee's cruiser squadron in the West Indies. There Hipper would be athwart the main British sealanes in the Atlantic: The Americas, and to a lesser extent, all traffic rounding either Cape Horn or the Cape of Good Hope would be in his area of operations. Hipper thus envisioned the destruction of England's lines of trade and commerce with much of the British Empire and the principal neutral, the United States. Hipper said in his operations proposal that "... carrying out of cruiser war with the battle cruisers in the Atlantic remains the one way in which our High Seas fighting ships can damage the enemy and thereby justify their existence."

His plan was based on four assumptions, which in the light of hindsight, appear both valid and cogent. They were, first, that British sea communications could be damaged in such a manner as to precipitate a favorable negotiated settlement of the war for Germany; second, that the German High Command would have to abandon any plan of invading the British Isles; third, Hipper's battle-cruiser force (which was both the main scouting arm of the High Seas Fleet and about 20 percent of the German strategic deterrent) would be unavailable in home waters for the duration; and lastly, that he, Hipper, would have to fight a battle in distant waters against a force of British capital ships, probably without the support of the main fleet.

There is considerable evidence to indicate the validity of Hipper's assumption that British sea communications could be damaged by a powerful overseas cruiser squadron.<sup>4</sup> Outside of home waters the only protection available to British commerce was a dozen or so obsolete armored cruisers and these would have been no match for Hipper's

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ships which were fast battleships albeit designated large cruisers. The British maintained an additional small force of light cruisers off U.S. ports to prevent German shipping from escaping and Hipper could have disposed of them on his way to the West Indies. Further, the degree of destruction of British or Allied commerce would have been controlled by three factors: the time Hipper's squadron operated without a major battle, the logistics, and the intelligence available to the German squadron.

Because Hipper's intent to operate in American waters could well have affected his success, it is relevant to speculate on possible American reaction to his proposed venture. Adms. George Dewey and Alfred Thayer Mahan would have been surprised at a German operation in the Caribbean as they both believed the main arena of battle-fleet conflict was to be the North Sea.<sup>5</sup> But the U.S. Navy's General Board would have been confirmed in its prediction of a Caribbean base of operations for a German attack in the Western Hemisphere.<sup>6</sup>

The operation itself if carried out in late November or early December 1914 might have struck a responsive chord in the American public. The U.S. Department of State at that time was making representations to the British government, warning of a serious deterioration in relations unless England ceased her heavyhanded enforcement of belligerency rights, a practice which had almost wiped out U.S. trade with continental Europe.<sup>7</sup> As Capt. Stephen Roskill says, in his analysis of the period of Anglo-American antagonisms:

... But the detention of American ships had provoked strong protests from that country, and had the German unrestricted submarine campaign and such *gaucheries* as the notorious Zimmerman telegram not produced still stronger reactions, the dispute over Belligerent

erent Rights might well have resulted in a disastrous deterioration in Anglo-American relations.

Roskill further notes that British "visit and search" policy was the chief cause of the War of 1812 and Americans remembered this.<sup>8</sup>

The second and third assumptions in Hipper's proposed operation, i.e., Germany would have to abandon any intention of invading the British Isles and the German battle-cruiser force would be unavailable for use in home waters for the duration of the war, are relatively simple to confirm. Germany's High Seas Fleet had the primary mission of holding the North Sea front, something which could be done without the help of a battle-cruiser force because of developments in mine warfare. That Germany lacked the ability to invade the United Kingdom in 1914 would seem evident because of the heavy casualties suffered in the first battle of the Marne and the German General Staff's assignment of a coastal defense mission to the High Seas Fleet. Even in the event of a fleet action in the North Sea, with Hipper gone the requirement for a German battle-cruiser force would not have been acute; most of the British battle cruisers would have been pursuing Hipper, if British action in the Falklands is indicative of a probable British response.

The fourth assumption—that he, Hipper, would have to fight a battle in distant waters against a force of British capital ships and probably without the support of the High Seas Fleet—is the most complex to analyze. It must be asked if Hipper's battle cruisers could reach their projected operating area, and several factors determine the likelihood of Hipper's achieving a breakout into the open Atlantic: the validity and timeliness of British intelligence, the weather, British command and control ability, and the location of Hipper's proposed commerce warfare operation, the West Indies.

The record of British naval intelligence in providing rapid and accurate information on German fleet movements, especially in the early days of World War I, is legend.<sup>9</sup> On the other hand, problems in British communications afloat, especially the winter of 1914-15 and later at Jutland, constitute a principal lesson of that conflict.<sup>10</sup> The weather in the North Sea and Atlantic in November and December 1914 was that of long dark nights, poor visibility and fog.<sup>11</sup> Thus the combination of bad weather and poor British command and control would seem to negate good British intelligence and make the breakout feasible. After the breakout, the logistics would be Hipper's most serious problem in reaching the West Indies. To begin with, the roundabout route proposed (north of the British Isles, west, north of Iceland, and thence south via Newfoundland) would have consumed 50 percent of Hipper's fuel before his arrival in potential operations areas.<sup>12</sup> In a letter to von Ingenohl, Hipper proposed a multifaceted solution to this situation:

Perhaps it would be practicable to proceed after coaling in one of the U-boat anchorages in the Northwest coast of Iceland—and a further coaling in Canada, simultaneously attacking the coast—thence along the American coast to the West Indies. Everything indicates to me that coaling in U-boat anchorages in Icelandic waters would not remain undiscovered very long; nonetheless the detailing of coaling steamers to such areas should not be overlooked.<sup>13</sup>

The German Admiralty Staff had, in fact, made arrangements worldwide for such operations before war broke out. These included advance purchase and storage basing of coal supplies, charts and such other logistical requirements as were thought prudent. But because Hipper was uncertain of the wartime

utility of these arrangements he proposed adding an outboard coal bunker to each of his battle cruisers to extend range and endurance.<sup>14</sup>

Was Hipper too bold in assuming he could place his colliers at the Icelandic U-boat anchorages and would this have given the operation away? He readily admits the possibility. But the probability of success then appeared good because the British were entirely unaware of the U-boat arrangements in Iceland.<sup>15</sup> A need for coaling by force of arms at Canadian ports would arise if, for example, Hipper had engaged in any action, such as engaging a large convoy, which would involve heavy fuel expenditure. Hipper's prospects of success were also enhanced by the lack of Canadian coastal defense.<sup>16</sup> Most important, everything depended on how long Hipper's battle-cruiser force could remain undetected by the Royal Navy. Hence he tailored his tactics in anticipation of possible detection as any major combat would doubtless reveal his location and weaken his resources for an engagement with British capital ships far from home.

Should he come upon a convoy, Hipper planned to disable the escort first to cut off enemy communications in order to deny the British a clear picture of his strength, disposition or movements.<sup>17</sup> He would then attack the convoy, leaving one battle cruiser to sink the crippled escort. Another rationale for this tactic was his lack of secure bases in his operating area; and he needed to husband his resources for the "inevitable battle with enemy heavy forces."

No doubt Hipper's arrival in the shipping lanes off North America would have disclosed his position. But the British deployment of a large force of capital ships, presumably 2:1 or at least 10 dreadnoughts, to destroy Hipper would have altered the balance of power in the North Sea.<sup>18</sup> At the very least it would have created some opportunities

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for offensive action by the High Seas Fleet. Hipper would have been at least 5 days ahead of his pursuers unless delayed by action off the Canadian coast. Millions of tons of German shipping tied up in U.S. ports because of British blockade could have been freed and the blockade cruisers, mostly small light craft, would fall to Hipper one by one. Nonetheless, such operations off the U.S. east coast would have been particularly dangerous (a risk he was willing to take) because Hipper's presence was likely to be revealed and reported to the British more rapidly than if he were to operate in the West Indies or in the South Atlantic. He intended to rendezvous with Count von Spee's colonial squadron<sup>19</sup> even though the resulting increase in fighting strength would have entailed further logistics complications. Logistics aside, such a combination of Hipper and Spee would have been a strategic nightmare for the Royal Navy. The most significant flaw in these proposed arrangements was the lack of German overseas bases and provision for ammunition resupply.

The importance to the course of the war of Hipper's planned operation would not have been in the ships he sunk or if he himself were sunk. Rather, his deployment would have divided the British Grand Fleet, thus giving the German High Seas Fleet at least numerical parity, if not superiority. The level of training, materiel readiness and operational competence in the High Seas Fleet was at its height in December 1914, and that of the British less so. Prospects for German victory were good and had they won a battle in the North Sea the returning British force, whether recalled before or after sinking Hipper,<sup>20</sup> would have found its lines of communications cut and, outnumbered, would probably have been defeated. At that point the British would have lost the war.

But it was not to be. Admiral von Ingenohl, Fleet Commander in Chief,

disapproved Hipper's plan because Ingenohl thought it would be better to let the U-boat have its day before the main fleet or any part of it went out to fight.<sup>21</sup> He sent Hipper's operations proposal and his own comments forward on 14 November 1914 to Adm. Hugo von Pohl, Chief of the Admiralty Staff, and Admiral von Tirpitz, State Secretary of the Imperial Naval Office. The positions of both men on naval strategy in this period are well documented. Admiral von Pohl adhered to the basic premise of a "fleet-in-being" or *Kleinkrieg* strategy and preferred the U-boat warfare recommended by Ingenohl. In fact, his last act as Chief of the Admiralty Staff in February 1915 was to authorize its unlimited prosecution.<sup>22</sup> This Pohl-Ingenohl agreement on U-boat warfare foredoomed Hipper's operations proposal to the file cabinet. As for Tirpitz, he favored a direct attack by the High Seas Fleet on the Grand Fleet, regardless of German numerical inferiority. Only after the battle of Dogger Bank on 24 January 1915 did Tirpitz advocate commerce warfare.<sup>23</sup>

**Hipper's Plan: Historical Continuity.** Some 25 years later, Erich Raeder, Hipper's chief of staff in World War I, resurrected Hipper's 1914 proposal as the basis of the master plan for the reconstruction of the German Navy. Raeder presented his "Z-Plan" for a naval strategy based on commerce warfare to Adolf Hitler in January 1939, noting that "To operate against this lifeline of commerce, in case war came, should be the primary objective of the German Fleet."<sup>24</sup>

This rationale may be compared with Hipper's position as stated in the first paragraph of his commerce warfare operations proposal: "...nonetheless, carrying out of cruiser war with the battle cruisers in the Atlantic remains the one way in which our High Seas fighting ships can damage the enemy and thereby justify their existence."

Raeder continued: "Because of Germany's lack of naval bases and her unfavorable position, hemmed in as she was by the barrier of the British Isles, these ships must have great cruising range, plus speed to prevent their being caught by stronger enemy forces."<sup>25</sup>

This may be compared with Hipper's position as stated in the second and fifth paragraphs of his proposal:

... If the deployment is decided upon, I would unquestionably assign the four newest battle cruisers if their coal bunkering could be raised in some manner... The possibilities of the voyage could be greatly increased by giving the ships blisters for the required coal on the first part of the voyage.

Raeder's "Z-Plan" naval strategy included attacking British overseas trade by groups of "battle and light cruisers as well as U-boats and auxiliary raiders."<sup>26</sup> British naval intelligence speculated on the possible connection between German cruiser warfare in World War I and in World War II and noted that the German official history criticized the High Seas Fleet commander for not undertaking operations which would support the cruiser squadron under Count von Spee fighting its way home from the Far East.<sup>27</sup> The author of the official German history on overseas cruiser warfare in World War I was Erich Raeder.<sup>28</sup>

There are significant parallels between Hipper and his strategic grandson, the Soviet Northern Fleet commander. The Soviets today have feasible solutions to the traditional dilemma of logistics and geography faced by continental-based naval commanders. Today they have naval bases in Cuba and Somalia as well as at least potential bases in former Portuguese colonies in Africa. They have circumvented the problem of geography by advanced deployment of a significant number of combatants. They also have a large

merchant marine and fishing fleet which could provide an excellent logistics base afloat.

Commenting on Admiral Gorshkov's view of the history of World War I, Adm. Robert B. Carney noted:

Having sorted out what he believes to be the enduring principles, we may be sure that he applies them to his thinking concerning modern fleet composition and employment... It is to be hoped that later reviewers (of *Red Star Rising at Sea*, [U.S. Naval Institute, Annapolis, 1974]) would give these matters careful attention for Admiral Gorshkov's writings undoubtedly furnish some valid clues to current Russian maritime thinking.<sup>29</sup>

Gorshkov's emphasis on history in this book amounts to about 90 percent of the text. In his latest work, *The Sea Power of the State*, some 30 percent of the text is dedicated to "Pages from the History of Navies," including World War I.<sup>30</sup> In short, it would be foolish of the West to assume the Soviets are not profiting from naval historical studies. Perhaps the Soviets have learned something from Hipper since his view of fleet employment is markedly similar to their own. If the evidence of their ship construction programs is to be credited, the mission of sea denial still forms a very large part of the Soviet Navy's overall task. They are building multi-mission ships as a national force to forward the political aims of the Soviet Union, a strategy Hipper advocated for Germany in 1915.

**Hipper and the Strategy of Sea Denial.** Hipper recognized naval policy was to be dictated by national political requirements and by his civil and military superiors. He pressed for seapower as a solution to the stalemate on the Western Front by achieving a dominant position athwart the sealanes of the world. This meant bases were needed

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outside the continental landmass and ironically, Germany nearly had them by negotiation before hostilities commenced. The Wilhelmstrasse and Whitehall had agreed in principle to the transfer of Angola, San Thomé and Príncipe, and northern Mozambique to Germany in May 1913 but disagreements over the publication of the treaty delayed final sanction until the end of July 1914. However, because of the imminence of war, the treaty was never signed.<sup>31</sup> Hipper advocated ship types which would have performed best in an overseas context. His thinking on capital ships was welded to strategic position and bases. On 7 July 1915 he wrote:

Our present war strategy against England is due to its very nature stamped strategically defensive. This is because of England's geographical position combined with our lack of German Atlantic bases, i.e., the German Bight is cut off from the Atlantic and further, there is the relative strength of the British and German fleets. Due to the above circumstances a truly effective offensive on the high seas to sever British Atlantic communications and defeat England, which should be our aim, has not been possible.<sup>32</sup>

It should be noted that Admiral von Pohl, the German fleet commander, claimed in his private correspondence that his admirals and captains were less in favor of offensive action than was he in March 1915.<sup>33</sup> Nevertheless, Hipper's analysis was echoed by the German official history published in 1922 and by Arthur Marder's 1965 *magnum opus*.<sup>34</sup>

In unpublished position papers, Hipper criticized German warship design philosophy for emphasizing cost effectiveness rather than gun and speed superiority over the enemy. Nevertheless, he was aware of the political considerations inherent in any building

program as is evident from his response to his commander's inquiry concerning the type of capital ships to be built in the future. Writing on 7 July 1915, Hipper said: "In order to answer this properly, I should have to know what was the situation, what were the government's political objectives, and what role the armed forces of the country were to have in attaining those objectives."<sup>35</sup> Hipper wrote further that he believed large capital ships would be required to conduct overseas warfare in any future war, especially "if we desire to bring the war into the Atlantic." He said the threat of the U-boat could be countered by greater underwater defensive measures and higher speed in large capital ships.

Hipper felt Germany should refrain from further battleship construction until it was clear what the enemy was going to do; meanwhile, battle cruisers should be built. These, he said, should have heavy calibre guns carried in 4 turrets on the centerline with the greatest possible range and a secondary battery of 12 5.9-inch guns, conforming to German practice of the time.<sup>36</sup> Hipper also believed there should be at least 50 percent reserve gun tubes in shops at bases for each heavy gun mounted in the fleet.<sup>37</sup> As for armor, he was in favor of increasing the protection against plunging fire by adding armor to the decks and weapons systems, both turrets and magazine-handling areas. This could be accomplished by reducing the side armor. He also suggested a second armored deck to protect the rudder machinery and was in favor of increased freeboard aft and of complete watertight integrity of fore-and-aft spaces for the full length of the ship and to the upper deck. He also wanted a more spacious command tower especially for the flagship, with a good view aft.

In addition to better protection for future battle cruisers, Hipper wanted greater speed in any new construction as



well as greater reliability and endurance. He felt the maximum speed of new German capital ships should be over 30 knots, some 6 knots faster than the *Derfflinger* class, the latest battle cruisers in service in 1915.

Hipper wanted a greater radius of action than the German battle cruiser of 1915 possessed (some 2,000 to 2,500 miles), for operations overseas. If German bases or supply ships were available, then Hipper wanted oil-fired ships. If technology would permit, he wanted diesel engines because he said they provided a higher radius of action, contributed to ship stability, and advanced the ideal of a passage not heralded by great clouds of smoke.

The question may be asked if any ships resembling Hipper's prototype ever got onto the German drawing board, after von Pohl had passed the recommendations on to Tirpitz. Several ships did get on the drawing board,<sup>38</sup> a few were launched, but none saw service in World War I or under the Versailles Treaty. It is interesting to note such warships were designed for Raeder's navy, which had as its primary mission a war on sea communications. Norman Polmar, among others, asserts a similar mission exists for the Soviet Navy.<sup>39</sup>

It was not only surface ships which were to figure in the Imperial German Navy's strategy; indeed history records something entirely different. The role of the U-boat in German naval strategy is central to the history of the Imperial Navy in World War I. And lest Hipper be adjudged as a reactionary "battleship admiral" it is well to note that Hipper's personal journal contains numerous references to U-boat warfare which indicate he favored it as an effective weapon for Germany.<sup>40</sup> However, Hipper's official views on the tactical and strategic use of the U-boat indicate he did not feel it was a panacea, unlike most of his contemporaries.<sup>41</sup>

These unpublished observations are contained in his analysis of ship-type

questions tendered in response to von Pohl's fleet-wide request for commanders' opinions. On 7 July 1915 Hipper submitted an extensive letter in response to von Pohl's 20 February request; the letter included Hipper's definition of the missions and limitations applicable to the U-boat. He wrote:

Apart from offensive actions against enemy warships a range of activities previously performed only by surface craft falls to the U-boats in the future—strategic scouting, clearing and securing designated areas, guarding specific parts of the fleet at anchor, commerce warfare in the traffic lanes of enemy ports, and minelaying, especially off enemy coasts.

Escorting and scouting by U-boats are only practicable by day; the escorting of fleet units underway is limited by insufficient (U-boat) speed. Also, their ability to scout tactically is gravely impaired by their insufficient surface speed and the impossibility of diving with their wireless rigged. . . .

The U-boats are of tremendous value as minelayers. They can lay a complete minefield in secrecy and this is the best way to do it. The type of minelayer U-boats which carry their own mines to the entrances of enemy harbors appear especially suitable, effective and practical and constitute a method of employment for torpedo-armed U-boats should they find only difficult targets for their weapons in the event the enemy are driven from the high seas.<sup>42</sup>

Hipper also cautioned that improved defenses and antisubmarine weapons could be expected and noted that in cases where the element of surprise was missing, the measure of U-boat success was very small. The two latter observations drew a marginal exclamation from

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von Pohl who wrote, "This man always against the U-boat!"<sup>43</sup> This was, of course, untrue.

As a continental-based naval commander, Hipper's appreciation of the capabilities and limitations of naval aircraft constitutes the penultimate element of his understanding of modern maritime warfare. He presented his opinions to von Pohl in the July 1915 letter. Hipper said airships, without regard to attack functions, were suitable for strategic scouting; the tactical scouting prior to a battle; the security service, securing a sealane, and for guarding a fleet, "especially a fleet under way."

Hipper envisioned radio-equipped aircraft used by his surface ships to expand significantly their scouting ability, and he recognized they would be limited by weather conditions and darkness. More importantly, he foresaw aircraft and airships assuming an antisubmarine mission in combination with surface forces. By August 1918 such forces existed in the German inventory as they did in that of the Allies. He said that "the simultaneous use of light surface forces, airships and aircraft could be of great impact if systematically developed. . . . Should we make as great an effort in air weapons as in the underwater weapons it would give us absolute superiority over all other nations in the world."<sup>44</sup>

**Conclusions.** Hipper's theoretical contributions to the art of naval warfare were produced primarily between November 1914 and July 1915. During this period many of the traditional constraints on a continental-based naval commander came sharply into focus. Geography (the barrier of the British Isles), national priorities (the two-front land war), national outlook (the innate conservatism and ignorance of the national command in adhering to a fleet-in-being strategy) all conspired to keep victory beyond the grasp of the opera-

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tional commander. Moreover, war came too early for the Imperial German Navy: The desired date in terms of capital ship strength was closer to 1921 when some 60 dreadnoughts would have been operational as would overseas bases. By way of contrast, the Soviet inheritors of continental-based naval command now have ports available in the Caribbean and in Africa and they are carefully pursuing their building programs which are meshed with a diplomacy forwarding their overriding political aims. In retrospect, Hipper's operational approach to commerce warfare was fraught with difficulties and dangers, most of which required audacity and initiative. On paper and in action as a commander at Jutland, Hipper showed himself possessed of these qualities. But institutionally speaking, such were not the hallmarks of the Imperial German Navy. Nor for that matter did Hitler's navy under Raeder convince its own national leadership that it was worthy of being so credited. The other elements of Hipper's approach to his naval strategy of sea denial, notably the integration of airpower, underwater weapons and surface forces, accurately presaged both technology and strategy. Most of Hipper's elements of naval strategy are to be found in Soviet naval strategy albeit metamorphosed. For example, it would be well to remember that Hipper did not advocate an aircraft carrier per se;

## BIOGRAPHIC SUMMARY

Professor Philbin earned his Ph.D. from Kings College, University of London. A Naval Reserve officer, he served as Gunnery Officer in U.S.S. *Harwood* (DD-861). He is currently a member of the faculty of the Virginia Military Institute.



he saw the aircraft as an antisubmarine and support weapon. The *Kiev* is the embodiment of just such a concept.<sup>4 5</sup>

Though there are similarities between the views of Hipper and his strategic descendants, they are not the same: Hipper lived and operated in an era

destroyed by World War I. And while the vicissitudes of time, ideology and nationality limit the validity of historical analogy, there is sufficient value in the data itself to warrant comparison. To paraphrase Admiral Carney, the enduring principles need to be sorted out.

## NOTES

1. Bundesarchiv/Militärarchiv, Freiburg im Breisgau (hereinafter BA/MA) F149/PG74106 "Kreuzerkrieg mit Grosser Kreuzer," November 1914 (Commerce War with Battle Cruisers), Franz Hipper to Friedrich von Ingenohl, 12 November 1914.

2. See Holger H. Herwig, *The German Naval Officer Corps* (London: Oxford University Press, 1973), pp. 174ff; see also Karl Axel Gemzell, *Organization, Conflict and Innovation: A Study of German Naval Strategic Planning 1888-1941* (Lund, Esselte Studium, 1973), pp. 176ff; see also Edward Wegener in *Marine und Marinepolitik im Kaiserlichen Deutschland 1871-1914* (Düsseldorf: Droste Verlag, 1972), pp. 236-262.

3. Reinhard Scheer, *Germany's High Sea Fleet in the World War* (London: Cassell, 1920), pp. 37-41. See also BA/MA N162/1 *Nachlass Hipper* (Hipper's personal war diary) entries for 6 and 14 August 1914.

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5. Robert Seager and Doris Maguire, eds., *The Letters and Papers of Alfred Thayer Mahan* (Annapolis: U.S. Naval Institute, 1975), vol. 3, pp. 699-700. See also Ronald Spector, *Admiral of the New Empire: The Life and Career of George Dewey* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana University Press, 1974), p. 196.

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9. David Kahn, *The Codebreakers, The Story of Secret Writing* (New York: Macmillan, 1972), pp. 206-297; Scheer, p. 73; see also Viscount Jellicoe, *The Grand Fleet: Its Creation Development and Work* (London: Cassell, 1919), pp. 56-57; see also Herbert O. Yardley, *The American Black Chamber* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1931), pp. 210-220; H.C. Hoy, *40 O.B. or How the War Was Won* (London: Mayflower Press, 1932), pp. 19-25.

10. Public Record Office, Chancery Lane, London (hereinafter P.R.O./ADM) Admiralty 137/342, "Grand Fleet Wireless Telegraphy Memoranda 1914-1918." See also A.J. Marder, vol. 3, *Jutland and After*; see also vol. 2, pp. 137ff, and 167ff. See also G. Frothingham, *The Naval History of the World War (1915-1917)*, vol. 1 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1926), pp. 200ff; see also E.B. Potter and C.W. Nimitz, *Sea Power A Naval History* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1960), p. 451.

11. U.S. National Archives (hereinafter Nat Arch) File T-1022/PG 62369-62382/Reels 141, 142, 207, von Ingenohl, *Kriegstagebuch des Kommandos der Hochseestreitkräfte* (War Diary of the High Sea Fleet Command) 30 July 1914 to 27 January 1915. See entries made for weather on a daily basis for this period.

12. BA/MA F50-66/16/17/18, Reichsmarineamt, *Deutsche Kriegsflotte, vol. 3, Grosser Kreuzer 1908-1914* (Imperial Navy Office, German Fleet, vol. 3, Battle Cruisers), *Ships Characteristics' Manuals*. See entries for fuel and endurance for S.M.S. *Derfflinger*, *Moltke*, *Seydlitz*, *von der Tann*, and *Blücher*, pp. 26-27 each manual.

13. BA/MA F149/PG 74106, Hipper to Ingenohl, p. 2.

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14. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

15. P.R.O./ADM 1/5691-8770. This file contains the Admiralty index of intelligence on Germany. It was searched carefully for reference to Iceland being used for U-boat operations with no reference found; P.R.O./ADM 137/1988, *Grand Fleet Intelligence Office Files 1914-1918* was also negative; Ministry of Defence Naval Library, Earls Court, CB 1182, *German Navy*, Naval Intelligence Division, Admiralty War Staff. This unpublished official intelligence compendium on the Imperial German Navy 1914-1918 contains no reference to such bases.

16. Sir Julian S. Corbett and Sir Henry Newbolt, *Naval Operations History of the Great War*, 5 vols. (London: Longmans, 1920-1934), vol. 1, pp. 5, 15. See also *Jane's Fighting Ships* (London: Sampson Low, 1914), p. 29. Only Bermuda is listed as fortified.

17. BA/MA F 149/PG 74106, Hipper to Ingenohl, p. 2.

18. In November 1914 there were no less than seven British dreadnoughts in dock with condenser troubles and two were on trials and not yet combat-ready. Two battle cruisers were detached to hunt von Spee in the South Atlantic. Three battle cruisers were in the Mediterranean. This left 14 dreadnought battleships and 4 battle cruisers available to the English at least 10 of which would have had to hunt Hipper. By 30 November the Germans had 16 dreadnoughts available besides those under Hipper. See Marder, vol. 2, pp. 43ff. and BA/MA F368-376/PG 76545-76572, *Dislocation Der Seestreitkräfte* (Disposition of Naval Forces), August 1914-November 1918. See weekly entries for High Sea Fleet Nov/Dec 1914.

19. Hipper to Ingenohl, p. 2. See also Ingenohl to Hugo von Pohl, Chief of Admiralty Staff, 14 November 1914.

20. This is assuming the British home forces would have been defeated by the High Seas Fleet without Hipper.

21. BA/MA F149/PG 74906, Ingenohl to Pohl, 14 November 1914. For further discussion see von Pohl, *Aus Aufzeichnungen und Briefen Während der Kriegezeit* (Berlin: Karl Siegmund, 1920), p. 5. See also von Tirpitz, *Deutsche Ohnmachtspolitik im Weltkrieg: Politische Dokumente*, vol. 2 (Hamburg & Berlin: Hanseatische Verlagsanstalt, 1926), pp. 108ff.

22. Gemzell, p. 184, n. 42; see also BA/MA N158, *Nachlass von Müller 1871-1926* (Georg von Müller's personal war diary). Müller was Chief of the Kaiser's Naval Cabinet. See entry for 4/343.

23. Gemzell. See also Pohl, pp. 39ff, 77ff; and Tirpitz, *Dokumente*, pp. 104ff, 11, 116-117, 119, 200.

24. Raeder, *My Life*, p. 272.

25. *Ibid.*

26. Raeder, p. 273.

27. Leith, p. 5.

28. Raeder.

29. Sergei G. Gorshkov, *Red Star Rising at Sea* (Annapolis: U.S. Naval Institute, 1974), trans. by Theodore A. Neely, Jr., Herbert Preston, ed., commentary by R.B. Carney, p. 50.

30. Gorshkov, *The Sea Power of the State* (Moscow: Military Publishing House, 1976). See pp. 103-253, out of 436 pages total.

31. Sir A.W. Ward and G.P. Gooch, eds., *Cambridge History of British Foreign Policy* (New York: Macmillan, 1923), vol. 3, pp. 477-478. See also Fritz Fischer, *Germany's Aims in the First World War* (New York: Norton, 1967), pp. 38-39; Gemzell, p. 160.

32. Nat Arch, T-1022/PG 77733d/Reel 1659, *Kriegserfahrungen der Hochseestreitkräfte* 1 April-30 June 1915 (War Experiences of the Forces Afloat), Hipper to Hugo von Pohl, 7 July 1915, pp. 4-6.

33. Pohl, *Aus Aufzeichnungen und Briefen*, p. 117.

34. Marder, *From the Dreadnought to Scapa Flow*, vol. 2, p. 3. See also Otto Gross, *Der Krieg zur See, Nordsee*, vol. 1 (Berlin: Mittler, 1922), p. 41.

35. Nat Arch, T-1022/PG 77733d/Reel 1659, Hipper to Pohl, p. 3.

36. German policy on dreadnought battle-cruiser construction provided 5.9-inch secondary batteries in all ships. This was in contrast to British policy which refrained from a secondary armament until the Iron Duke-class battleships (6th class of dreadnought type built) and the Tiger (4th type of battle cruiser built). The German Imperial Navy Office Design Bureau had already produced an advanced battle-cruiser design that could be repeated several times so as to free design teams for work on advanced battleships. See Nat Arch, T 1022/PG 66088/Reel 1501, *Protokoll über die Sitzung am 24. September 1910* (Memorandum for Record), Battle Cruiser Design Conference Derfflinger Class.

37. This detail must appear somewhat pedantic. However, logistics constituted a serious problem for the German Fleet as the war dragged on. This was because Admiral Tirpitz had put all his money into ship construction and had shorted the fleet on consumables and spare parts.

See, e.g., Nat Arch, T 1022/PG 76531/Reel 984, *Admiralstab Befehle an andere Behörden* (Admiralty Staff Orders and Correspondence with Other Commands), 6 April 1915. See correspondence between Admiralty Staff and Imperial Navy Office; BA/MA N162, *Nachlass Hipper*, 6/14, 15-21 November 1915.

38. These ships are covered in a study by F. Forstmeier and S. Breyer, *Deutsche Grosskampfschiffe 1915-1918* (Munich: J.F. Lehmann Verlag, 1970), see especially table, pp. 18-19.

39. Norman Polmar, *Soviet Naval Power—Challenge for the 1970s* (New York: Crane Russak, 1974), p. 24. For German connection, pp. 42ff. See Gorshkov, *Sea Power of the State*, p. 2. See also John E. Moore, *The Soviet Navy Today* (New York: Stern & Day, 1976), pp. 7-8.

40. BA/MA N162 *Nachlass Hipper*, 1/10, 6 August 1914; 1/29, 23 September 1914; 2/22, 20 March 1915; 3/5, 1 May 1915; 3/6-7, 9 May 1915; 3/10, 27 May 1915; 4/3, 1-8 September 1915.

41. Gerhard Ritter, *The Sword and the Sceptre: The Problem of Militarism in Germany*, vol. 3, *The Tragedy of Statesmanship—Bethmann Hollweg as War Chancellor (1914-1917)* (Coral Gables: Miami University Press, 1972), pp. 119-120.

42. Nat Arch, T 1022/PG 77733d/Reel 1659, *Kriegserfahrungen*, 7 July 1915, pp. 10-12. This was written in the context of the first U-boat offensive and the *Lusitania* sinking.

43. *Ibid.*, marginal note, p. 7.

44. *Ibid.*, pp. 12-13.

45. William R. Hynes, "The Role of Kiev in Soviet Naval Operations," *Naval War College Review*, Fall 1976, pp. 41-42.

