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13. ABSTRACT (MAXIMUM 200 WORDS)

An Operational perspective of the Dardanelles Campaign during World War I. Despite a viable concept with feasible objectives and adequate resources, General Ian Standish Monteith Hamilton, the Commander-In-Chief of allied ground forces Dardanelles Campaign, lack of operational art was directly responsible for one of the most documented failures and needless loss of lives resulting in strategic consequences for the Triple Entente. The Dardanelles Campaign commonly known as Gallipoli, consisted of a series of operations to gain control of the Dardanelles Straits in order to threaten Constantinople. The Triple Entente (Britain, France and Russia) were convinced the formidable continental power of Turkey would immediately cease all support and relations with the Central Powers (Germany and the Austro-Hungarian Empire) as a result of an attack on the capital. This brilliantly conceived, poorly planned, poorly commanded and poorly executed effort had the potential to completely alter a costly and destructive World War I. This campaign was one of many firsts in modern warfare; First major amphibious operation; The military use of aircraft, aircraft carriers, aerial reconnaissance, landing craft, radio communications, artificial harbors and submarines. The Dardanelles Campaign, one of the first major Joint-Combined amphibious operations in modern warfare, has many lessons for present-day operational level commanders and staff planners. Gallipoli is a good example of how a campaign with attainable objectives and adequate resources could result in a catastrophic failure due to a lack of operational level planning, communication and leadership; *Operational Art*. General Hamilton's shortcomings in leadership, overly optimistic assumptions, poor subordinate-superior communication, lack of battlefield synchronization - - *Operational Art* - - Are directly responsible for the allied failure at Gallipoli.

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Gallipoli is a good example of how a campaign with attainable objectives and adequate resources could result in a catastrophic failure due to a lack of operational art.

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Gallipoli: The Failure of a Commander-In-Chief

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
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MASTER OF MILITARY STUDIES

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THIS STUDY SHOULD INCLUDE THE FOREGOING STATEMENT.

Executive Summary

Title: *Gallipoli: The Failure of a Commander-In-Chief*

Author: Major Miguel A. Correa, United States Army

Thesis: Despite a viable concept with feasible objectives and adequate resources, General Ian Standish Monteith Hamilton, the Commander-In-Chief of allied ground forces, lack of operational art was directly responsible for one of the most documented failures and needless loss of lives resulting in strategic consequences for the Triple Entente.

Discussion: Within the first four months of World War I, the highly detailed war plans of both sides failed and produced a stalemate on the Western Front. Huge formations of soldiers encountered unprecedented lethality of modern arms, quickly blunting offensives. Winston Churchill came to the conclusion that a secondary front was required in the east. Churchill proposed a plan for a bold and audacious naval attack on the Strait of Dardanelles of which would later be commonly referred to as the Gallipoli or Dardanelles Campaign of 1915. This campaign was one of many firsts in modern warfare; first major amphibious operation; first military use of aircraft, aircraft carriers, aerial reconnaissance, landing craft, radio communications, artificial harbors and submarines.

Gallipoli consisted of a series of operations to gain control of the Dardanelles Straits in order to threaten Constantinople. The Triple Entente (Britain, France and Russia) were convinced the formidable continental power of Turkey would immediately cease all support and relations with the Central Powers (Germany and the Austro-Hungarian Empire) as a result of an attack on the capital. This brilliantly conceived strategic initiative had the potential to completely alter a costly and destructive World War I.

The campaign began with a naval advance that was abandoned as a result of Turkish mines sinking three Allied battleships. In April 1915 the Allies attempted a large-scale amphibious landing ending in a trench warfare stalemate. After both sides reinforced over a period of months, in August 1915 the Allies unsuccessfully attempted to break the stalemate with another ground offensive. Following the failed offensive, the allied leadership ordered a withdrawal. Although the initial amphibious landings were a success, allies failed to exploit many opportunities. Subordinate commanders missed decisive opportunities throughout the campaign as a result of poor communication and misunderstanding of the Operational Commander's intent. This brilliantly conceived, poorly planned, poorly commanded and poorly executed effort had the potential to completely alter a costly and destructive World War I.

Conclusion: The Gallipoli or Dardanelles Campaign has many lessons for present day operational level commanders and staff planners. This is a good example of how a campaign with attainable objectives, adequate resources and courageous troops could result in a catastrophic failure due to a lack of planning, communication and leadership; *Lack of Operational Art.*

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Gallipoli: The Failure of a Commander-In-Chief

Chapter One – Introduction

“If the Fleet gets through, Constantinople will fall of itself, and you will have won not a battle but the War,”

- Lord Kitchener solemnly declared to Sir General Ian Hamilton, the newly assigned Ground Forces Commander-In-Chief, as he was preparing to assume command of the amphibious forces at Gallipoli.¹

On November 1914, First Lord of the Admiralty Winston Churchill proposed a plan for a bold and audacious naval attack on the Dardanelles Straits which would later be commonly referred to as the Gallipoli or Dardanelles Campaign of 1915. This campaign was one of many firsts in modern warfare; first major amphibious operation; first military use of aircraft, aircraft carriers, aerial reconnaissance, landing craft, radio communications, artificial harbors and submarines. Gallipoli consisted of a series of operations to gain control of the Dardanelles Straits in order to threaten Constantinople. The Triple Entente (Britain, France and Russia) were convinced the formidable continental power of Turkey would immediately cease all support and relations with the Central Powers (Germany and the Austro-Hungarian Empire) as a result of an attack on the capital. This brilliantly conceived strategic initiative had the potential to completely alter a costly and destructive World War I.

Many historians and revisionists have argued that the catastrophic failures of the Dardanelles began and ended with the War Council’s strategic leadership failures and indecision. Unfortunately, the 1917 Dardanelles Commission cast a large unfocused net of blame on all levels of Command. The commission blame line began with the Senior British Leadership and ended with the tactical commanders and anyone involved in the

¹ Edmond Delage, *The Tragedy of The Dardanelles* (London: Butler and Tanner Ltd., 1932), p. 72.

campaign.² Despite the British War Council's lack of strategic resolve, poor guidance and indecision, adequate resources were apportioned to the Gallipoli Campaign to successfully accomplish this potentially strategic in consequence mission. Adversities such as the second rate assets, subordinates and forces and the perceived lack of British Higher Headquarters support, could have been overcome by a talented operational commander flawlessly applying operational art through leadership. Despite a viable concept with feasible objectives and adequate resources, General Ian Standish Monteith Hamilton, the Commander-In-Chief of Allied ground forces, lack of operational art was directly responsible for one of the most documented failures and needless loss of lives resulting in strategic consequences for the Triple Entente. The CINC's lack of understanding, vision, training and employment of operational art directly influenced every phase of this doomed campaign.

In this paper I will analyze Allied operational art, leadership, planning, coordination and employment of forces during the amphibious phase of the Gallipoli Campaign and outline the impacts of an ineffective operational Commander-In-Chief on a viable strategic and operational concept. In a quest to find the relevance for a future Joint Force Staff Planner, I will use the Joint Publication 3-0 definition of Operational Art to analyze the actions of General Sir Ian Hamilton and his Operational Level Staff during the Amphibious Phases of the Gallipoli Campaign.

² USN Institute, "Professional Notes" *Proceedings*, Volume 46, Number 2, (February 1920), p. 274.

Chapter Two – Operational Art Defined

The operational level links the tactical employment of forces to strategic objectives. The focus at this level is on operational art – the use of military forces to achieve strategic goals through the design, organization, integration, and conduct of strategies, campaigns, major operations and battles.³

Joint Publication 3-0 states that operational art determines when, where, and for what purpose forces will be employed to affect the enemy with the desired results. The publication later comments that operational art provides a framework for operational level commanders to communicate and order their thoughts in planning campaigns and major operations. Lack of operational art may lead to a “set of disconnected engagements with relative attrition”. Joint staffs and subordinate commanders must look at friendly and enemy forces and the arrangement of efforts in the intended environment to determine if the desired effects will be achieved. Operational art ensures that the joint commander and their staffs maximize strengths of each force (air, land, sea, space, special operations forces) by synchronizing efforts and ensuring an economy of force. This art enables Joint Force Commanders (JFC) to use resources efficiently and effectively to achieve strategic objectives. As per JP 3-0, Executive Summary, Operational Art is characterized by the following fundamental elements: Synergy, simultaneity and depth, anticipation, balance, leverage, timing and tempo, operational reach and approach, forces and functions, arranging operations, centers of gravity, direct versus indirect approach, decisive points, culmination and finally termination.⁴ In an

³ U.S. Department of Defense. Joint Staff, *Joint Publication 3-0*. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Defense, 2001), Chp II, Sec 2.

⁴ *Ibid*, Chp III, Sec 3.

effort to focus on what is most relevant to the modern day Joint Commander and his staff
I will focus on select facets of the operational art and include other relevant aspects of
modern day joint warfare.

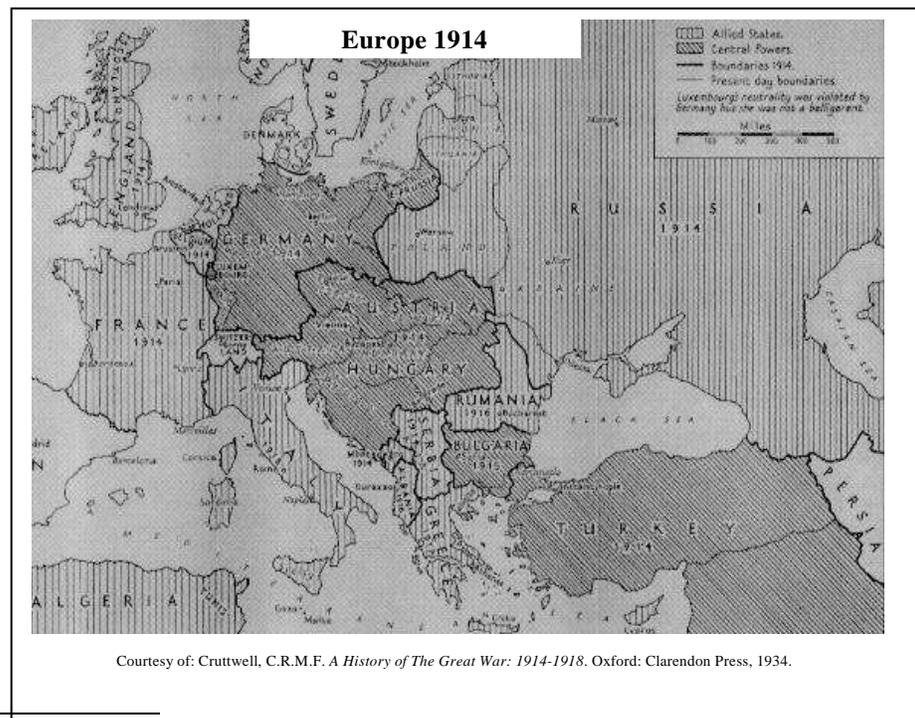
Chapter Three – Establishing the Strategic Setting: *Opening the Eastern Front Door*

The Struggle will be heavy, the risks numerous, the losses cruel; but victory, when it comes, will make amends for all. There never was a great subsidiary operation of war in which a more complete harmony of strategic, political, and economic advantages has combined, or which stood in truer relation to the main decision which is in the central theatre. Through the narrows of the Dardanelles and across the ridges of the Gallipoli Peninsula lie some of the shortest paths to a triumphant peace.⁵

- Winston Churchill, 1915

Within the first four months of World War I, the highly detailed war plans of both sides failed and produced a stalemate on the Western Front. Huge formations of soldiers

encountered the
unprecedented
lethality of
modern arms,
quickly
blunting
offensives.
Desperate and
futile attempts



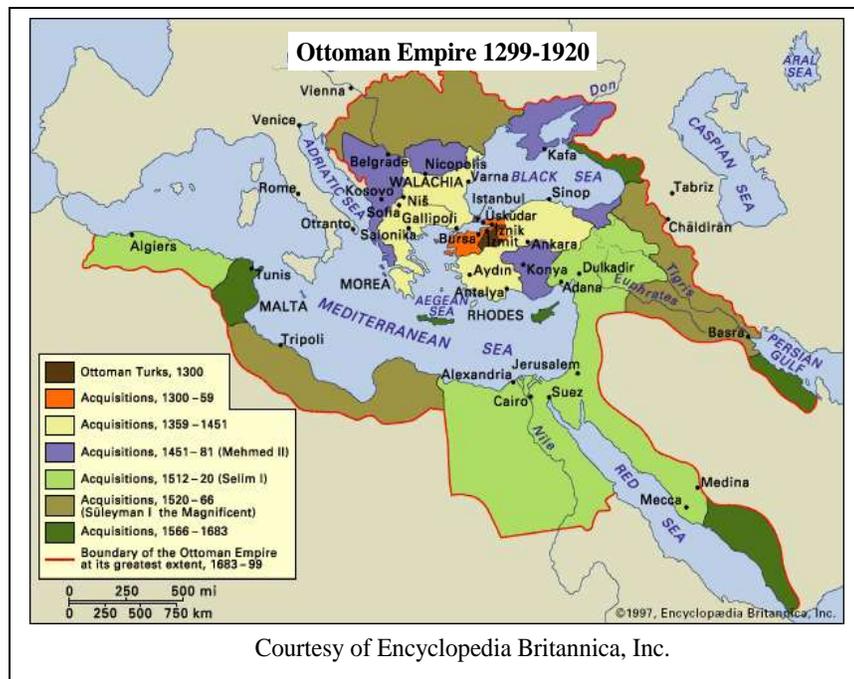
⁵ Winston S. Churchill, *The World Crisis 1911-1918* (Abridged) (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1931), p. 23.

to outflank each other ended in entrenched defenders. Defenses and trenches stretched 466 miles throughout Western Europe from Switzerland to Belgium with an estimated one man for every four inches of the front.⁶ The Honorable Winston Churchill summed up the grim and desperate situation of the stalemate:

The German Fleet remained sheltered in its fortified harbors, and the British Admiralty had discovered no way of drawing it out... The Admirals pinned their faith to the blockade; the Generals turned to a war of exhaustion and to still more dire attempts to pierce the enemy's front... The great armies lay glaring at each other at close quarters without any true idea of what to do next.⁷

Early in 1914, both the Central Powers and the Triple Entente recognized the strategic importance of Turkey's geographical position in the war effort. Both England and Germany began to court Turkey with military advisers and lucrative military contracts in an effort to ensure neutrality if not temporary alliances of opportunity. The Turkish

military was in dire need of reorganization and rebuilding as a result of heavy losses sustained in the Balkan Wars. The newly formed revolutionary



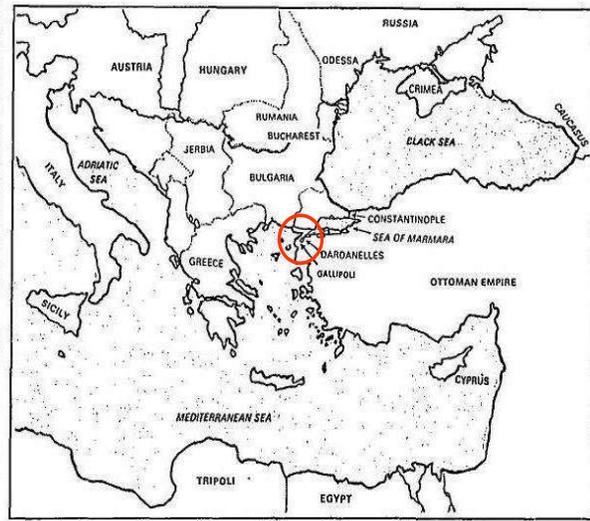
⁶ LCDR Paul M. Insch, USN. "The Dardanelles Campaign of 1915 and the Failure of Operational Art," Unpublished Research Paper, US Naval War College, Newport, RI, 1994, pp 2-3.

⁷ Churchill, *The World Crisis*, pp 3-4.

government placed a high priority on modernization of their military. At the beginning of World War I, the British military assistance was focused on advisement, reorganization and equipping Ottoman Naval forces. Concurrently, the Germans chose to advise, equip and reorganize the poorly equipped and led Turkish ground forces.

Through a series of political blunders, the British Government turned the Turkish Government towards an alliance with the Central Powers. In August of 1914, the Turkish government attempted to engage England in a series of talks aimed towards a formal alliance with the Triple Entente Powers. Lack of strategic vision on behalf of some high level British officials, government inconsistency and the belief that the newly formed Turkish government was temporary, resulted in the British rebuking the effort in dialogue. Adding insult to injury, the British also chose to confiscate two new Turkish capital ships recently constructed in British Naval yards. During this period, Turkish naval crews were in England prepared to sail the ships back to Constantinople. This infuriated Turkish Leaders and forced them to join the Central Powers and later declare war on the closest Triple Entente member, Russia. Germany capitalized on the British shortsightedness and quickly delivered two German cruisers and began the alliance with a new and thankful Turkish ally.

Dardanelles Straits



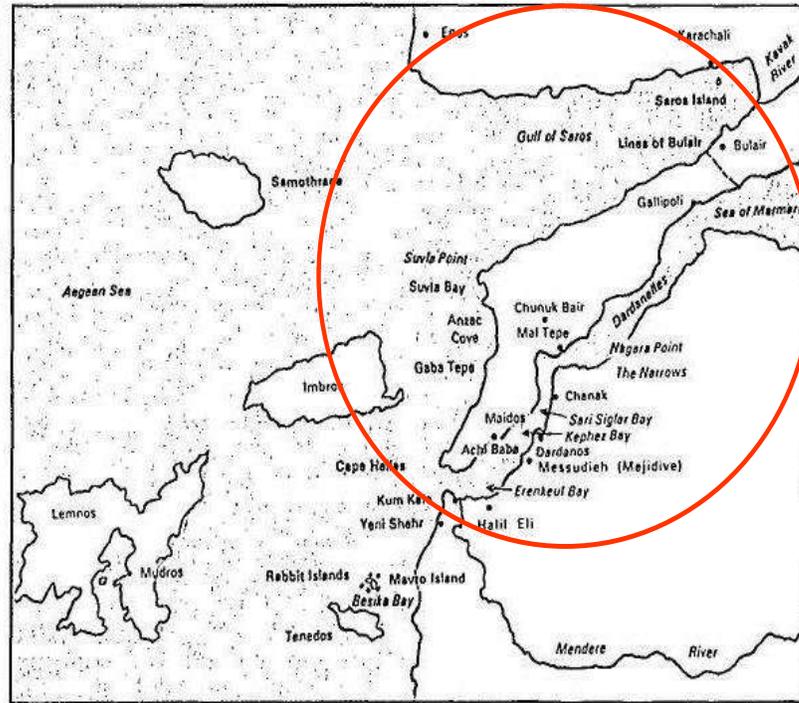
Courtesy of: Cortez, Stephens D. "Gallipoli - What Went Right?" The Marine Corps Gazette, Oct 1993.

A young but brilliant visionary, Winston Churchill, rejected the World War I strategy of attrition and began to search for alternatives to the slaughter of

Allied forces in the ensuing trench warfare. Churchill proposed an Eastern Front to support the stalemated Western Front. Lord Kitchener, the Secretary of State for War, asserted that there were not enough ground forces for a second front or campaign. The Eastern Front campaign was revisited when allies were informed that Russian forces were at risk of being overrun by Turkish forces. In January 1915, the British Ambassador to Russia relayed a message from the Russian leadership requesting the Allies conduct a demonstration in Southern Turkey in an effort to force the Turks to withdraw some forces from the Russo-Turkish war front.⁸ Churchill came to the conclusion that a secondary front was required in the East. Lord Kitchener continued to voice his reluctance at sending ground forces to the Eastern Front. After discussing alternatives with Winston Churchill they sent a message to the British Admiralty requesting a naval demonstration

⁸ Jeffrey Wallin, *By Ships Alone: Churchill and the Dardanelles*. (Durham, North Carolina: Carolina Academic Press, 1981). p 52.

Dardanelles Straits



Courtesy of: Cortez, Stephens D. "Gallipoli – What Went Right?" *The Marine Corps Gazette*, Oct 1993.

off of the Turkish Coast. Later Churchill proposed to the War Council that an attempt by the Navy to conduct a forcible entry into the Dardanelles was feasible and would be effective. Roughly 40 days later, Lord Kitchener reconsidered and gave the order to deploy ground forces with a separate ground commander. The fact that the ground forces were not included from the inception of the campaign would create an adverse second and third order effect upon the campaign. These effects will be discussed later in the paper. Churchill's energetic urgings would result in the planned attack on the Turkish capital of Constantinople. This bold plan was named the Dardanelles Campaign as a result of the most significant obstacle enroute to the final capital city objective.

The allies quickly recognized that Constantinople was the Turkish strategic center of gravity. In 1914 historic Constantinople was regarded as the cradle of the Ottoman people and a source of national pride. In 1453, Ottoman Sultan Mehmet II, captured the great Byzantine city and made Constantinople the Ottoman Empire Capital. During this period Mehmet II completely rebuilt and developed the Asian crossroads capital to become a leading cultural and academic center for the entire Muslim region. Constantinople possessed many historic Christian and Muslim religious symbols such as the magnificent Blue Mosque and Saint Peter's Cove Church, one of the oldest Churches in the world. Constantinople, referred to as Istanbul by the Turks, replaced Baghdad as the center of Sunni Islam. In 1914, this symbolic capital was the largest population center in Turkey with an estimated population of 900,000 residents. Constantinople possessed the majority of Turkish gun, munitions plants and civilian manufacturing infrastructure. Additionally, this developed capital provided access to the Bosphorus and was considered to be the gateway to the Middle East from Europe.⁹

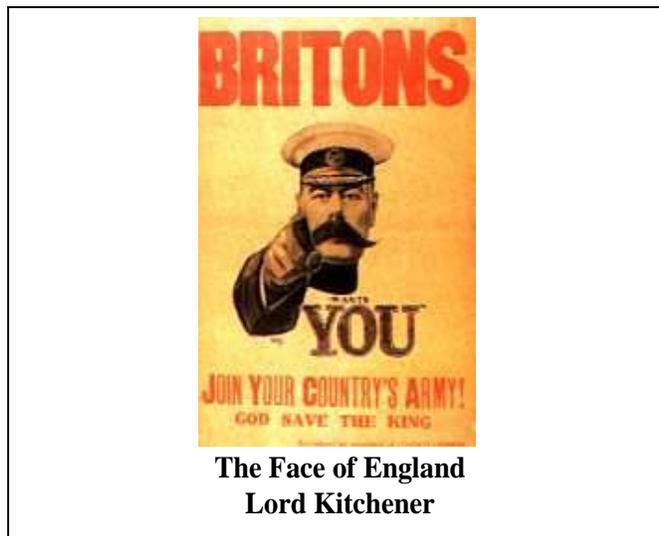
The British, French and Russian Alliance hoped that an attack on the Turkish capitol, the primary strategic objective of the Dardanelles Campaign, would lead to an ultimate victory. The British leadership assumed that a forceful entry by a formidable naval force into the Dardanelles followed by a bombardment of Constantinople would have positive strategic results and second and third order effects. The allies estimated that upon the bombardment that Turkey would quickly choose to exit the war or forcibly begin to support the Triple Entente. Turkey's exit from the war would enable Russia to receive supplies and export grain from the Black Sea ports and no longer force them to apportion forces to the Caucasus. These forces in turn could be deployed to the Eastern Front in

⁹ Unsigned. *Constantinople History*. (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/constantinople>), 10 January 2005

support of the Triple Entente advances towards Germany and Austria. Sir Winston Churchill believed that there were other significant benefits of attacking Turkey. Churchill estimated that this substantial show of force would convince neighboring countries such as Greece, Italy, Bulgaria and Romania to support the Allied efforts against Germany and reduce the Central Powers threat on British oil in the Middle East or the Suez Canal in Egypt. The allies considered these effects to be vital to alleviating the pressure on the Western Front where the war would be won. The operational decisive point in achieving the final objective of threatening and if necessary, bombarding Constantinople was neutralizing the strategically vital Dardanelles Strait defenses. The only entrance and exit of the Black Sea and the Sea of Marmara was the thirty-eight mile long Dardanelles bottleneck into the Aegean Sea of which some areas were extremely restrictive at a mere fourteen hundred yards wide. During World War I, this sea line of communication was extremely vital to Russia as ninety percent of its grain and half of Russian exports passed through this waterway.¹⁰

Allied Personalities

Field Marshall Sir
Horatio Herbert
Kitchener, the
of State for War, served
only military man of
level rank on the War



Lord
Secretary
as the
Cabinet
Council.

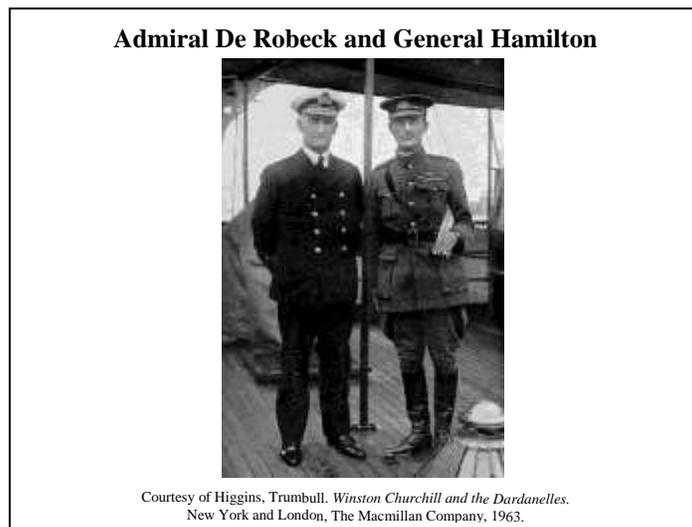
Lord Kitchener had initially agreed with opening the Eastern Campaign but disagreed

¹⁰ Captain L. C. Mason, USN. "Operational Aspects of the Dardanelles Campaign, 1915" Unpublished Research Paper, US Naval College, Newport, RI, 2004, p. 4.

that ground forces should be diverted to the effort. He believed that all Allied ground forces were needed on the Western Front. Kitchener selected several retired officers to command the units of the Gallipoli Campaign. Kitchener wanted to ensure that the best and brightest would serve on the Western Front and not “wasted” on the secondary effort at Gallipoli. Tragically, his selection of commanders did not include the former head of the Naval Mission in Turkey and Dardanelles expert, Admiral Limpus or a former British attaché staff member Lieutenant Colonel Cunliffe Owne. Admiral Limpus had recently departed the British mission in Turkey and Lieutenant Colonel Cunliffe had recently spent two years collecting case studies on the Turkish Forces, hydrographic reports, and topography studies. These superior officers had an extensive wealth of knowledge of the Dardanelles that would have been invaluable to the campaign. The Admiral had evacuated Constantinople with the latest maps and possessed an extensive knowledge of the German-led, Turkish Military disposition, composition, strength and critical vulnerabilities. Ironically, it was believed by the senior British Leadership that his appointment to the fleet would have offended the at the time neutral Turkey.

Additionally, none of the Lieutenant Colonel’s information was utilized nor was he consulted despite the fact that he fought at Gallipoli during the later stages of the campaign.

Vice-Admiral Sir John de



Robeck, initially the Deputy Commander, became the Gallipoli Naval Commander, and was considered an extremely competent Naval officer.¹¹ He quickly recognized that it was vital to foster a cooperative relationship with the ground forces to set conditions for the overall success of the Gallipoli Campaign. Unfortunately, Vice-Admiral de Robeck would prove indecisive and timid during a strategically critical time in the campaign. The Admiral's showed irresolution and tragic apprehension in not initiating a renewed naval attack during or immediately after the ground offensive. He did not recognize the truly strategic scope of his inactions.

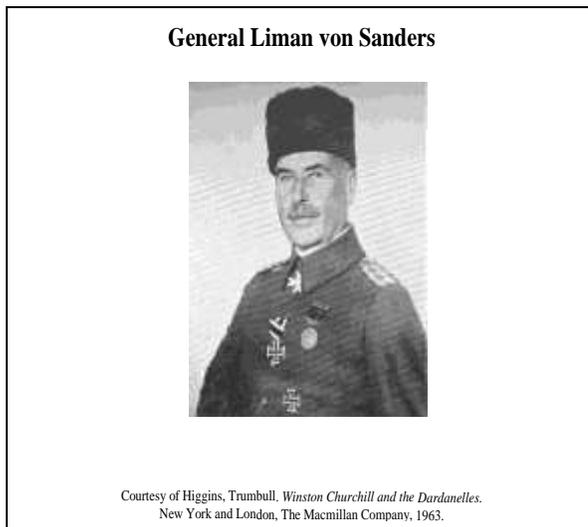
General Sir Ian Standish Monteith Hamilton, the Gallipoli Ground Commander, arrived during the initial naval effort of the campaign. Hamilton and de Robeck were coequals and fostered a relationship of mutual coordination. General Hamilton had earlier served as the Homeland Defense Commanding General and had recently worked for the Lord Kitchener. This may have led to Hamilton sending overly optimistic reports from the front. Hamilton was considered to be more of a consensus builder through persuasion rather than an authoritarian through direction. Although extremely intelligent, his indirect method of command would contribute to the confusion of subordinates, leading to inaction during the ground offensives. These leadership shortcomings were compounded by General Hamilton's natural but excessive desire for secrecy. His demand for secrecy resulted in few of his officers being knowledgeable of his complete campaign plan and intent.¹²

¹¹ Unsigned. *Vice-Admiral Sir John de Robeck Biography*. (<http://www.canakkale.gen.tr/eng/portraits/p7.html>) 10 January 2005

¹² LTC A. M. Nemeck, USN. "Lessons Learned from the Gallipoli Campaign of 1915." Unpublished Research Paper, (US Naval War College, Monterey, CA: Naval War College, May 1995), p. 14.

Enemy Personalities

General Liman von Sanders was an effective German cavalry officer with an



enormous amount of credibility throughout the senior Ottoman leadership circles. As the head of the German military mission in Turkey, Otto Liman von Sanders had risen from Chief Inspector of the Turkish Army to Commander of the Turkish Forces in

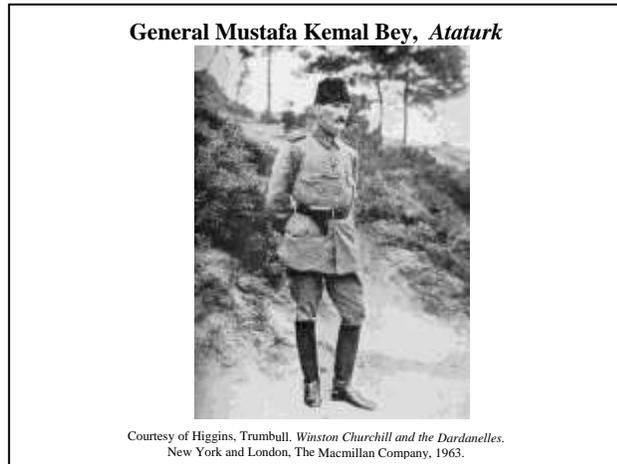
the Caucasus. In March 1915, the highly regarded senior officer was transferred to the command of the Fifth Army on the Gallipoli Peninsula. Prior to the commencement of World War I, von Sanders reorganized the Turkish Ground Forces enabling them to conduct modern-western style, sustained ground operations. Von Sanders introduction of German Field Grade Officers in key positions in the Turkish Army was extremely effective, although it resulted in some resentment and communication issues with host nation Turkish Officers.¹³

Von Sanders' timing was impeccable. Ironically, late 1914 was a year that the Turkish military leadership had planned on focusing efforts on rebuilding and recovering the ground forces as a result of the disastrous Balkan Wars of 1912 and 1913.¹⁴ If General von Sanders had not been in Turkey, the military modernization and the Dardanelles Campaign would have reached different conclusions.

¹³ T.H.E. Travers. World War I Gallipoli History. (<http://www.worldwar1.com/neareast/gallfail.htm>) 10 January 2005

¹⁴ Edward J. Erickson, "Turkey Prepares for War", *Relevance Quarterly*, Vol 9, No 2 (Spring 2000). p 2.

The other hero of Gallipoli was Mustafa Kemal Bey. At age 35, General Kemal had a reputation for possessing an innate grasp of strategy and an ability to inspire his troops through bravery and decisive action on the battlefield. Although his superiors recognized his talents as a commander, they regarded



him as an uncompromising and difficult subordinate. Mustafa Kemal was a proven combat leader who served in the Italo-Turkish and Balkan Wars. His leadership and vision in the fog of war proved invaluable during the Turkish defense of the Dardanelles.

Chapter 4 - The Failed Naval Advance

The initial British Commander of the Mediterranean Fleet, Admiral Sackville Carden, estimated that a naval advance to Constantinople would require 30 days. Many iterations of the plan were sent back to the London Military High Command to include a unilateral naval effort and a joint-combined naval advance followed by a small Royal Marine amphibious assault. During this period recent naval bombardment experiments had shown that naval gunfire was increasingly accurate and effective against forts and that “a duel between ships and forts need no longer be so one-sided a contest as in the past.”¹⁵ The allies decided to conduct a purely naval operation to preserve invaluable ground forces and ironically to preclude any risks of becoming involved in another costly major ground offensive.

¹⁵ Brigadier General C.F. Aspinall-Oglander. *Military Operations, Gallipoli Volume I*, (London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1929), p. 30.

During this period, defense of the straits was left to a poorly trained and outfitted Turkish Artillery Regiment. The Turks had different types of guns with varying calibers in the same battery, inadequate training, and very little ammunition to effectively defend the area of operation. The Dardanelles Straits varied in width from 4.5 miles down to a mere 1400 yards. The most restrictive location was commonly referred to as the Dardanelles Narrows. At the beginning of the war the straits were defended at two locations; the southern entrance and a four-mile section in the center of the vital sea line of communication. Two forts at Sedd-el-Bahr, on the European side (vicinity Cape Helles), and two forts at Kum Kale on the Asiatic side guarded the mouth of the Dardanelles. Together these Turkish forts combined for a total of 19 guns of which only 4 were serviceable.¹⁶ These outer defenses provided overwatch for a two and a quarter mile-wide entrance to the forty-one statute miles straits. At the narrows the Turkish Forces concentrated a majority of their firepower and fortifications. The vital chokepoint was defended by a fort at Chanak on the Asiatic side and Kilid Bahr on the European side. These installations had employed some 72 guns, torpedo tubes, and maneuverable 6inch howitzers. Additionally, the Turks integrated a minefield in the entrance to the narrows and between the two forts within the narrows.¹⁷

On 19 February 1915, Admiral Carden and a combined French-British Naval Force bombarded the Turkish fortifications at the mouth of the Dardanelles in an effort to maneuver north to Constantinople. The 46 ship naval force included battleships, heavy

¹⁶ Aspinall-Oglander, *Military Operations, Gallipoli Volume I*, p. 32.

¹⁷ Philip Haythornwaite, *Gallipoli 1915, Frontal Assault on Turkey*, (Westport, CT, Praeger: 2004) pp 28-33.

hours. This quickly unnerved Admiral Carden and his staff. Soon after the sinking of the capital ships the Admiral relinquished his command as a result of a personal breakdown. Vice-Admiral John de Robeck, Admiral Carden's deputy, received the command and abandoned the naval advance in order to receive guidance and plan another attempt to force the straits. Ironically German and Turkish Officers would later write that on 18 March the Turkish defenses were nearly crushed by the Allied naval armada. After the war, a German Aide de Camp wrote of the state of affairs in Turkey during that period:

I have no doubt whatever that Turkey would have made peace. There would have been a revolution. The appearance of ships before Constantinople would have been sufficient. Constantinople is Turkey. There were no troops to speak of in Constantinople.¹⁹

The initial Allied estimate of the strategic importance of Constantinople was accurate.

Chapter Five – The Amphibious Advance (March 1915)

On 23 March, 1915 the unilateral naval force advance was terminated. The newly arrived ground commander, General Sir Ian Hamilton, and Vice-Admiral de Robeck agreed that a joint-combined naval-ground operation was the best course of action as a result of the failed naval venture. Both commanders sent messages to London requesting approval for an amphibious assault. After much discussion and debate, the British leadership concurred. General Hamilton began planning an amphibious landing to seize the Gallipoli Peninsula. Hamilton planned to use the ground forces allocated for Constantinople in the aftermath of the bombardment. The ground forces and assets were not combat loaded for an amphibious landing as the senior Naval and Marine Commanders did not believe that a landing would be required as they had wrongly estimated that the Turks would quickly abandon their position upon the commencement

¹⁹ Churchill, *The World Crisis*, p. 271.

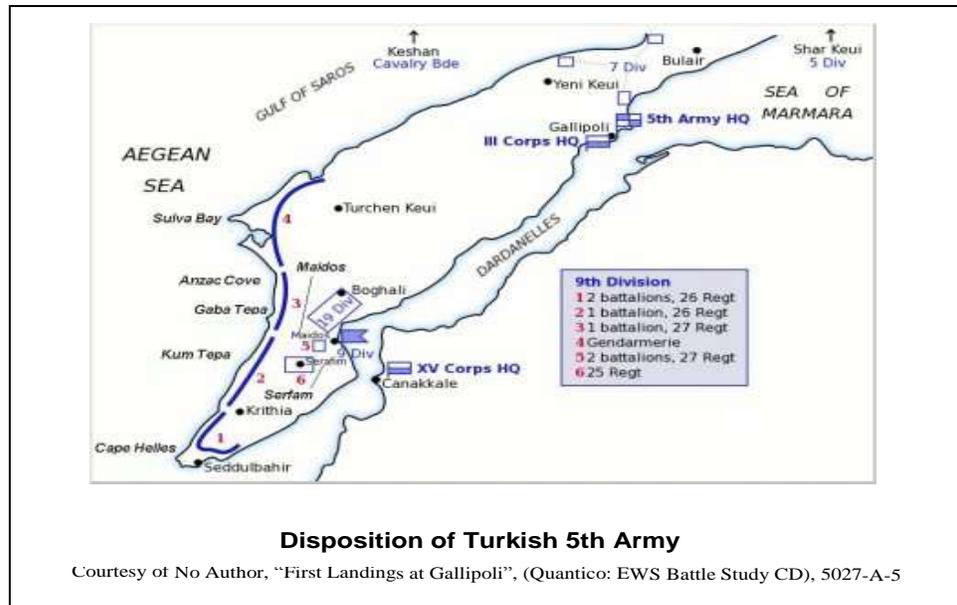
of the Naval bombardment. Additionally, some reluctance to combat load the ships may be attributed to ground force commanders inexperience as the most recent amphibious landing was conducted fifty years earlier during the Crimean War in 1854. This forced the Allied forces to redeploy to Egypt and prepare for upcoming amphibious landings. Crucial time was lost. Upon reaching Egypt, the remainder of the amphibious forces arrived from various locations. The Allied amphibious force was trained and combat loaded for the Gallipoli landing in late April.

March 1915	Allied Forces	Turkish Forces
Divisions	1-British Army, 2-ANZAC, 1-Royal Navy, 1-French Colonial	6- Turkish Army
Troop Totals	78,000	84,000
Ships	46 Ships	Supply Ships
Forts with Artillery	0	15
Submarines	6	0

²⁰

The Turkish government took advantage of the reprieve to task organize and deploy

Army forces
to the
Dardanelles.
Through
numerous
enemy spies
and Allied



²⁰ Eric Wheeler Bush. *Gallipoli*, New York: St Martin's Press, 1975, p17.

counterintelligence faux paxs, the Turkish leadership had received intelligence that the Allied forces were going to return to attempt an amphibious landing vicinity the straits enroute to Constantinople. Unfortunately Allied soldiers were sending and receiving letters in Egypt referring to the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force address as the “Constantinople Expeditionary Force”. The Allied hand was tipped.²¹ Upon deploying from Egypt both the Allied forces and the enemy knew their objective.

Six Turkish Divisions (estimated at approximately 84,000 men) under German General Liman von Sanders prepared for the defense of the Dardanelles with the main effort of the Gallipoli peninsula. The Turkish soldiers were poorly equipped, especially in clothing, and suffered an overall lack of motivation. Von Sanders attempted to acquire logistics for his newly formed unit but was unable to get additional supplies. The enemy commander challenged his subordinate commanders to instill the men with a great spirit of national identity, placing his hope in the overall historic toughness of Turks to bring them through.²² Von Sanders deployed the 5th and 7th Divisions in the northern isthmus of Bulair, the 11th Division and 3rd Division on the Asiatic side of the Dardanelles vicinity Kum Kale and the 9th Division in the southern portion of the peninsula from Suvla Bay to Sedd el Bahr.²³ As Sanders studied the terrain, he paid particular attention on the beachheads and commanding high ground at the center of Gallipoli. He noted the recently failed attempt of the Allied Naval advance near the narrows and believed that the allies would attempt to secure terrain in the Gulf of Saros north of this restrictive chokepoint. Von Sanders estimated that the location near Bulair (7th Division area of operation) was

²¹ Mason, “Operational Aspects of the Dardanelles Campaign, 1915,” p. 17.

²² Unsigned, *First Landings at Gallipoli*, (Quantico: Expeditionary Warfare School Battle Study CD,1999), 5027-A-5.

²³ Unsigned, *First Landings at Gallipoli*, (Quantico: EWS Battle Study CD 1999), 5027-A-5.

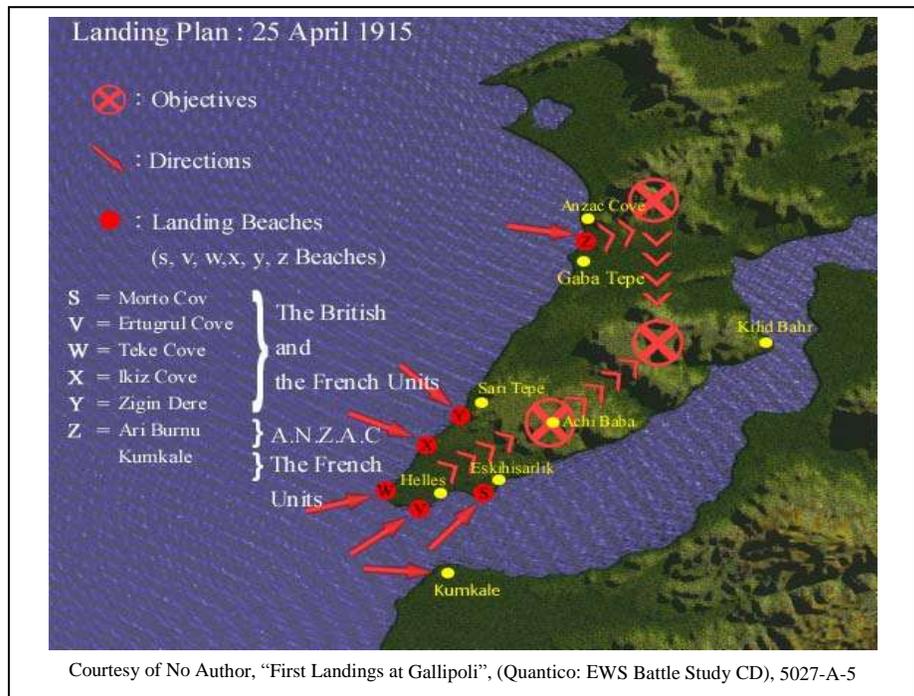
the most critical and most likely location for the Allied landing. The general remained in Bulair for the majority of the time and supervised the preparation of its defenses. He considered the Allied forces to be a formidable force and understood that he could not fully predict where the allies were going to land. He therefore planned for a more flexible defense with a maneuverable reserve. He selected the 19th Division to serve as the reserve force and counterattack for rapid reinforcement throughout the Dardanelles Theater. This famous division commanded by Ataturk was credited with saving the Dardanelles from Allied capture.²⁴

Hamilton was apportioned the British 29th Division, 2 Australian-New Zealand (ANZAC) Divisions, a Royal British Navy Division and a French Colonial Division for a total of 5 divisions. Hamilton's plan was to weight the main effort with the 29th British Division in an attack on the southern tip Cape Helles with a primary objective seizing the high ground at Achi Baba. This complicated assault called for landings at 5 separate beaches (X,Y,S,W,V). The ANZAC Division was to conduct a supporting attack north of Gaba Tepe and move eastward with an objective of the high ground of Mal Tepe. The ANZAC advance was to cut off the enemy forces engaged with the main effort, 29th Division. The ground plan included a supporting amphibious demonstration and raid by French Forces at Besida Bay and Kum Kale. The remaining Royal Navy Division was to conduct another amphibious demonstration or diversion in the vicinity of Bulair.

Hamilton's intent was to conduct the amphibious demonstrations with a desired effect of

²⁴ Travers. World War I Gallipoli History. (<http://www.worldwar1.com/neareast/gallfail.htm>) 10
January 2005

delaying enemy maneuver of reinforcements to the southern portion of the peninsula against the Allied main effort and attack at Helles Point.²⁵



Hamilton was outnumbered 78,000 to 84,000, and did not have accurate maps nor the knowledge of the area that the

enemy possessed. The Greek Military Staff had earlier advised the Allies that they had estimated that it would take 150,000 soldiers to successfully invade the Dardanelles. Additionally, the British High Command in London possessed the latest in accurate maps acquired by the recently evacuated British Embassy. Despite the fact that General Hamilton did not possess the desired numerical superiority over his enemy, he could have overcome this adversity through surprise, naval gunfire support, and the disparity in quality of his superior forces versus the inferior Turkish soldier.

The Allies landed early 25 April 1915. The two initial French and Royal Navy amphibious demonstrations at Bulair and Kum Kale were extremely successful in occupying the Turkish Operational Reserve Division for a period of twenty-four hours as

²⁵ Cortez D. Stephens, "Gallipoli – What Went Right?" *The Marine Corps Gazette*, Vol 77, No 10, October 1993. p 4.

the Turkish Commanders could not locate the main attack. Major General Aylmer Hunter-Weston, a general known for his arrogance, disregard for the welfare of his men and planning incompetence, led the main effort 29th Division assault at Cape Helles. Hunter-Weston believed his plans progressed exactly as envisioned and that upon initiation of the battle he was no longer needed and could remain on the sidelines in a secure headquarters.²⁶ The assault on the five beaches was conducted with varying levels of resistance. Forces at “Y” Beach encountered no resistance and had wandered into an exposed Turkish flank. General Hunter-Weston at “Y” Beach did not completely understand General Hamilton’s intent in continuing the momentum in attacking the temporarily exposed Turkish flank. This hesitation resulted in the enemy 19th Division quickly reinforcing and driving the Allied force back into the ocean. This is one of the most famous missed tactical opportunities in military history. The reinforcing Turkish 19th Division Commander, Mustapha Kemal Bey was named the Hero of Gallipoli for his heroic actions. This tactical error had strategic consequences and will be analyzed later in the paper. The other four beach assaults were able to advance and consolidate their position by nightfall.

Lieutenant General William Birdwood led ANZAC forces on the supporting assault on Z Beach and Ari Burnu, 12 miles north of Helles Point. (Ironically, the ANZAC Commander was not supportive of Hamilton as Birdwood was originally designated to serve as the CINC of the ground forces. General Birdwood continued to resent the last minute Kitchener decision to subordinate him to General Hamilton.) As a result of poor maps and inadequate intelligence, the ANZAC supporting effort was met with

²⁶ Unsigned, *First Landings at Gallipoli*, (Quantico: EWS Battle Study CD 1999), 5027-A-5.

unexpected extreme terrain that favored the defense. The surprised Allied assault force quickly lost the initiative of the initial amphibious advance. The allies would later discover that the initial demonstrations had an unanticipated positive effect of the Turkish commanders. General von Sanders, redeployed a southern division northward giving the allies an initial advantage of almost 2 to 1 at Cape Helles. Due to the fog of war and friction however, the allies could not capitalize on this initial advantage. The first amphibious assault concluded in a 5-month stalemate of trench warfare similar to that experienced by Allied brethren on the Western Front.²⁷ Mistakenly the Allied Navy did not attempt a simultaneous or follow-on naval advance through the straits during the Allied amphibious attack. Another opportunity lost.

Chapter Six – Attempt to Break the Stalemate (August 1915)

At the conclusion of the failed initial amphibious assault, General Hamilton overcame his awe of Lord Kitchener and asked for additional reinforcements to break the trench warfare stalemate. Hamilton prior to this did not want to ask for any additional ground forces as Kitchener shared the ruthless reputation of not only refusing to apportion additional forces to requesting commanders but also taking soldiers from that command pronouncing that he only reinforced success. General Hamilton came to the realization that to successfully accomplish his mission that he was going to need additional forces and that he assumed that the enemy was also reinforcing. Concerned that a failure at Gallipoli would have negative affects on the Entente partners and neutral countries and the reputation and prestige of the Allied Forces Command, Lord Kitchener and the newly formed Dardanelles Committee approved the deployment of four additional divisions for the follow-on amphibious offensive. In August 1915, Allied

²⁷ Ibid. p5.

forces were reinforced with an additional 6 divisions for a total force of 99,000 men. The Turkish enemy too had been reinforced with an additional 10 divisions for a force totaling 110,000 men. The Allied CINC planned another attack in an effort to break the deadlock.

August 1915	Allied Forces	Turkish Forces
Divisions	1-British Army 2-ANZAC, 1-Royal Navy, 1-French Colonial Additional 6 Division (Multinational)	16- Turkish Army
Troop Totals	99,000	110,000
Ships	46 Ships	Supply Ships
Forts/Heavy Artillery	0	15
Submarines	6	0

28

On 6 August, the 9th Division, led by Lieutenant General Stopford, and ANZAC forces attacked Suvla Bay to support the 5 Division Cape Helles main attack. As in the initial attack, demonstrations at Bulair and on the Asiatic side of the Dardanelles successfully confused the Turks and delayed the deployment of their operational reserve for a period of 48 hours. Victory was again at hand. The Suvla Bay attack was met with minimal resistance. Tragically Lieutenant General Stopford and the ANZAC forces landed and set up bivouacs to rest their soldiers. In an effort to gain situational awareness, General Hamilton decided to visit the Suvla Bay landing site 48 hours after the initial assault. He was astonished to see soldiers resting and not attacking the high ground to the east. He immediately ordered the amphibious force to begin movement east. Twelve hours later Stopford's men attacked the high ground east of the beachhead. Tragically, the Turks had secured the vital high ground and vantage point 35 minutes prior to the Allied forces. Again, the Allies failed to outflank and turn the Turkish defenders as a

²⁸ Bush. *Gallipoli*, p. 17.

result of incompetence and lack of communication. They did not exploit the vulnerability. They did not understand the CINC's intent. In his memoirs General von Sanders wrote that the Allies at Suvla Bay had superior numbers and could have easily defeated the Turkish Defenses had they not delayed.²⁹ Unfortunately the Allies again missed an opportunity that would have had tactical, operational and possibly strategic consequences. The August offensive ended similar to the April 1915 attack; a World War

I trench warfare

stalemate. The

unsuccessful

offensive would

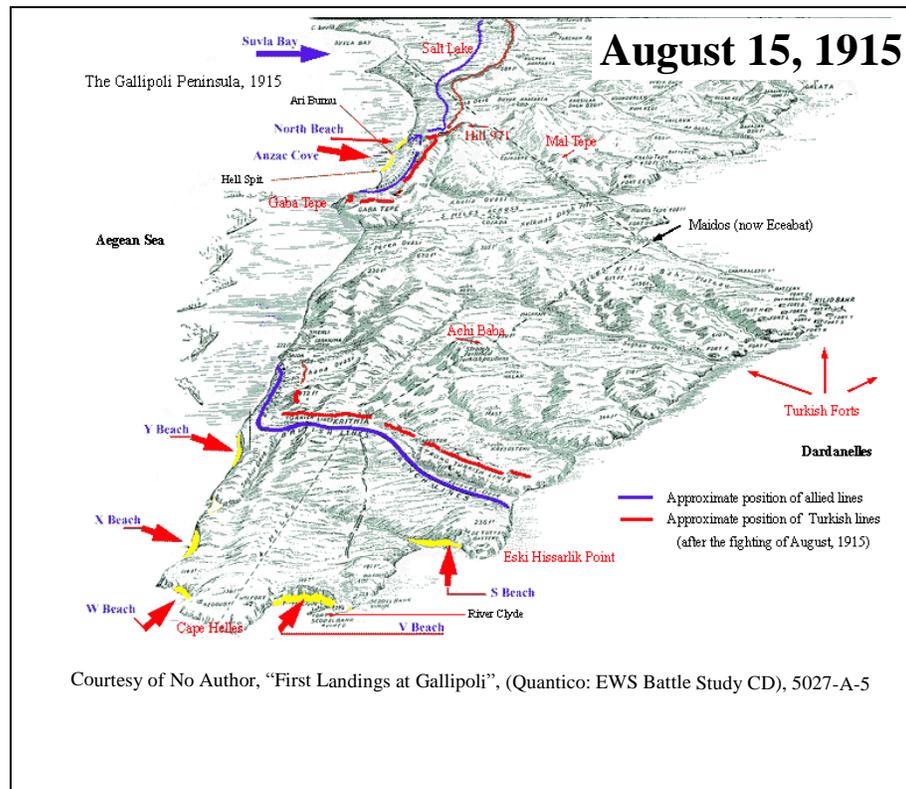
result in the

relief from

command of

General Sir Ian

Hamilton.



Chapter Seven

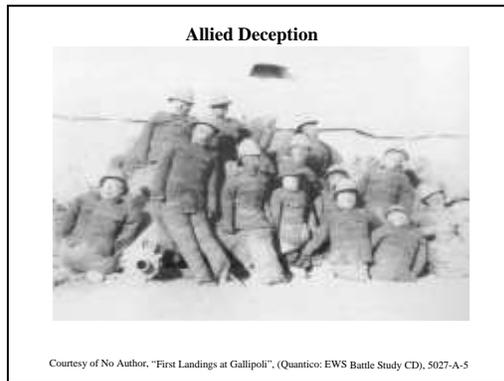
– The Flawless Allied Withdrawal (October 1915)

“The evacuation of Gallipoli was a triumph, closing a campaign of incompetence.”³⁰
– Philip Haythornthwaite, *Gallipoli 1915*

²⁹ Aspinall-Oglander, *Military Operations, Gallipoli Volume I*, p. 59.

³⁰ Haythornthwaite, *Gallipoli 1915, Frontal Assault on Turkey*, p.90

On 15 October 1915, General Sir Charles Monro assumed command of Allied Ground Forces. General Monro estimated that Allied forces would sustain 40,000 casualties in the attempt to withdraw from Gallipoli. This extremely high estimate of casualties and the loss of political capital and public credibility convinced the British Admiralty to direct another naval force advance. Vice-Admiral de Roebeck replied that he was convinced that the fleet would not be successful in negotiating the narrows and that General Monro was likewise convinced that future Allied ground offensives were futile. Lord Kitchener was sent to Gallipoli to gain an appreciation of the situation. In disappointment, he also concluded that evacuation was the only viable option. After a storm ravaged the peninsula in late November causing many Allied deaths, London gave Vice-Admiral de Roebeck permission to evacuate Gallipoli. Ironically, through effective planning, brilliant deception and flawless phased and synchronized execution, the Allied forces evacuated the Dardanelles with few casualties. Some historians and Allied Generals hungry for a success pointed to the withdrawal as being an operational victory. The withdrawal proved that with a talented leader that effectively utilized operational art, the Allied forces at Gallipoli could overcome the adversity and successfully accomplish the mission. The synchronization of disengaging an enemy that had gained the momentum and retrograding a 99,000 man force and embarking them on ships would seem daunting to modern day leaders and staff. The ground forces proved that they were agile and adaptable and if given a feasible, synchronized, yet complex plan of operation with solid Joint Force Commander's intent, that they could accomplish the mission. These were the same forces and assets that a few days earlier General Sir Ian Hamilton and his staff commanded.



Chapter Eight – CINC Operational Art Analysis

Important lessons for the Joint Force Commander and his staff come from General Hamilton's application of operational art and leadership failures. As in Clausewitz' Military

Genius, not all officers have the operational art, talent and vision to imagine the first, second, third and fourth order effects of a decision or maneuver. Commanders and their staffs must manage symmetrical and asymmetrical actions to build upon friendly strengths and exploit enemy vulnerabilities to attain operational and strategic success. Most recently the JFC responsibilities and authority have increased as this also includes the management if not coordination of our interagency capabilities in reaching our nations goals. Today's joint force commander is expected to be able to use all elements of national power at their disposal and to understand the effects on not just our adversary's military power, but all aspects to include their society and culture. This unique responsibility is made more complicated by the unique challenges and capabilities of the modern day trend of coalition warfare. Modern-day warfare has made it more critical to fully understand and utilize operational art to synchronize and manage the current complex battlefield.

Synergy

Synergy as defined in Joint Publication 3-0 is the integration and synchronization of air, land, sea and special operations forces in joint operations in multiple dimensions.³¹ In today's modern battlefield, Joint Commanders must be able to effectively manage a three dimensional battlefield while maximizing the unique capabilities of each service component. The JFC and staff must be able to see the "Big Blue Arrow" and orient the components in the greater good of dispelling today's inter-service rivalries.

A critical failure at Gallipoli was that of commanders and staffs at all levels down did not make clear the importance of seizing key terrain. Just as Lord Kitchener, the CINC believed that during the first amphibious assault the enemy would not fight once allies executed a successful beach landing. Hamilton and his staff had temporarily estimated that the decisive point was the beach landing thus unintentionally marginalizing the importance of moving inland and gaining the high ground. He and the staff did not synchronize the fight after the initial landings and chose to leave this difficult task for his division commanders despite the fact that he was well aware that he had been assigned retired and weaker commanding officers.

Hamilton did not compensate for his inferior commanders and their noted lack of combat leadership experience. During the second amphibious assault, Hamilton and his staff had reports which made it clear that General Stopford had intended to scale back his assault to little more than establishing a beachhead. General Stopford did not learn the valuable lessons from the first assault. Again, Hamilton failed to step in or intervene and provide the synergy needed to accomplish such a complex plan.

³¹ U.S. Department of Defense, Joint Staff, *Joint Publication 3-0*, Chp 3, sec 10.

Of note was the complete surprise to General Hamilton and his staff of the premature conclusion of naval gunfire support during the amphibious landings. When a surprised and discouraged ground staff inquired as to the lack of fire support, the navy replied that they never intended to continue support for a prolonged period. The Naval gunfire during the landings was critical and invaluable to the exposed amphibious landing forces.

Another uncoordinated but, vital action was that Vice-Admiral de Robeck did not commence nor ever intended to commence a naval advance through the Dardanelles during the amphibious assault. These were inexcusable misunderstandings as a result of lack of communication and synchronization between the naval and amphibious landing staffs. If De Robeck had sent some the capital ships up the Dardanelles Straits the enemy would have been forced to deploy some troops in an attempt to block or screen, relieving some of the pressure from the amphibious forces. This Allied multi-pronged maneuver would have been overwhelming. This synergy would have proven pivotal, as the naval force would have accomplished their overall mission negotiating the straits to bombard Constantinople.

One of the most written about lost opportunities and lack of synergy was that of the unopposed landings four miles north of Cape Helles at “Y” Beach. As stated earlier, 2000 Allied men landed unopposed at the beach and climbed the cliffs. Upon negotiating the cliffs two Colonels questioned who was senior and in charge of the operation. Twice the commanders sent messages requesting clarification from General Hunter-Weston, the division commander. Ironically, General Hamilton, aboard the *HMS Queen Elizabeth*, sailed by and quickly noticed the opportunity. The Naval Chief of Staff, Commodore Keyes, pleaded with the CINC to divert the Royal Navy Division from their planned feint

to “Y” Beach to exploit the success. General Hamilton chose to “request” approval from the subordinate division commander as he felt he could not issue the order without the consent of the on-site commander. General Hunter-Weston replied later with “approval” of the augmentation. The Division Commander also sent a belated answer as to who was the senior ground commander, but it was too late. Ironically, during the period of inadequate guidance, a field grade officer walked unopposed to the deserted high ground of Achi Baba, the division’s objective. Many historians believe that if these vital positions were taken and held that it would have avoided the slaughter of Gallipoli and turned the campaign.³²

Trumbull Higgins, author of *Winston Churchill and the Dardanelle: A Dialogue in Ends and Means*, conducts an in-depth study of the political climate that surrounded the British indecisions concerning the Dardanelles.³³ I disagree with Mr. Higgins’ argument that British Politicians, to include Winston Churchill bear greater fault than the military for the failures of the campaign by not providing more guidance and forces in a timely manner. As stated earlier, military historians have made too much of the issue of proper force allocation at the strategic level and have not given the proper attention to the actions of General Hamilton. This is all evidenced by the testimony of senior Turkish officers who disclosed how effective British led forces and how close the allies were to being victorious.³⁴ It is too easy and shortsighted to blame the senior British leadership. It is understandable that Lord Kitchener and other senior officials were reluctant to send additional forces to the newly established Eastern Front. The Allie were concerned with

³² Mason, USN. “Operational Aspects of the Dardanelles Campaign, 1915,” p. 16.

³³ Trumbull Higgins. *Winston Churchill and the Dardanelles*. (New York and London, The Macmillan Company, 1963), p. 93.

³⁴ Churchill, *The World Crisis*, p. 273.

the lack of progress on the Western Front and the threat of a German breakout. The ground CINC had the responsibility to synchronize the tactical and bridge the operational and strategic vision with the guidance and forces that were allocated. General Hamilton clearly understood the strategic level intent. Undoubtedly, more timely strategic decisions and additional first-rate forces and assets would have been useful to the CINC. Despite these difficulties, General Hamilton could have led his forces to victory by capitalizing on the numerous opportunities for successes such as Suvla Bay and “Y” Beach. These failures would have turned the entire campaign in favor of the British.

General Hamilton continued to have two staffs; an administrative staff and a general staff. These staffs did not coordinate and provide the vital synergy that was needed for such a complex mission. Both staffs found themselves planning for the same issues and wasting valuable effort and resources. An inexcusable lack of synergy is that of the utilization of the invaluable yet, limited Royal Navy Air Force reconnaissance assets.³⁵ These pilots frequently overflow the beaches and reported detailed enemy disposition, composition and strength. These reports were both disregarded and misplaced. The staffs planned the invasions in locations that pilots had reported as having large concentrations of enemy forces prepared in defenses with crew served weapons.

Operational Command/Unity of Command/Unity of Effort

Many of the lessons learned during the Gallipoli Campaign are applicable to present day operational level commanders and joint staff planners. Commanders at all levels throughout history have overcome adversity and small odds of success to affect a victory. As the CINC bridging the overall strategic aims with the tactical ways and means he could have been victorious in defeating General von Sanders through Generalship. The

³⁵ Aspinall-Oglander, *Military Operations, Gallipoli Volume I*, p. 137.

Division Commanders as individuals did not have the forces or resources to conduct a unilateral amphibious assault of the Dardanelles. As stated earlier, General Hamilton should have provided the synergy in orchestrating naval gunfire support and providing the vision and leadership to ensure that subordinate commanders understood his intent. If they did not fully comprehend his intent, he should have intervened during the many pivotal periods of the first and second amphibious assaults. If every Allied NCO, Company Grade and Field Grade Officer, shared the mindset of the commander's intent and understood the importance of continuing momentum to gain the high ground and dig in, there is little doubt that they would have been victorious in the campaign. It is the CINC's responsibility to ensure unity of effort. He must forge them to be one arm.

Some authors point to the unclear set of strategic objectives and inadequate resourcing of military leadership as leading to a lack of unity of effort. Although Lord Kitchener should have assigned one CINC for overall command of both the naval and ground forces, (as we have relearned relatively recently in such conflicts as Grenada) this was not an issue as Vice-Admiral De Robeck and General Hamilton had agreed from the onset to foster a command climate of joint cooperation. The Vice-Admiral had agreed on a modern day supported (the receiver of efforts) and supporting (the provider of efforts) relationship as evidenced by the intentional beaching of the 2000 ton collier ship, the *HMS River Clyde* on 25 April. This large ship was prepared with sandbagged machine guns and holes cut on the starboard and port side of the bow to enable 2100 troops to deploy. *The Clyde* was run aground at "Y" Beach in support of the amphibious landings. The mere thought of running a ship aground to support ground forces would make a modern day naval officer cringe. Ironically, the innovative idea of converting this vessel

into a Trojan Horse came from a Royal Naval Officer, Commander Edward Unwin.³⁶ Hamilton had the cooperation from the Navy to ensure a unity of effort between both forces.

On the other side of the trenches General von Sanders was dealing with cultural and language differences between German and Turkish Officers. These officers and men had fundamental differences in motivations for fighting for a homeland versus a foreign advisor, differences in agendas as extensions of perspective governments, and differences in ultimate allegiances. It is likely that host nation officers questioned German advisor dedication to the defenses of Turkey. By effectively communicating his intent, emplacing competent German and Turkish Officers in pivotal positions and supervising the execution of his envisioned preparation of the defenses, General von Sanders overcame the cultural differences and potential friction through operational art. He made his intent extremely clear in that he was expecting his commanders to maneuver forces in reaction to the Allied amphibious penetration. In a unity of effort, his commanders understood that they could not effectively defend the entire Gallipoli area of operation, therefore were forced to retain a maneuverable reserve. Despite the fact that Allied forces were comprised of leaders and men of the same, if not similar cultures, the British operational commander and staff could not overcome the communication breakdown and lack of unity of effort.

An age-old question worthy of discussion is how close should a Corps and Operational Commander manage or increasingly “micromanage” their subordinates in the close fight. In combat, loss of life as a result of a commander’s quiescence is inexcusable. A Commander can recover from a few instances of over managing or

³⁶ Unsigned. *World War I History*. (www.worldwarI.com/sfclyde.htm) 10 January 2005.

“micromanaging” subordinates but cannot recover from needless losses of life as a result of the opposite “hands off” approach to command. In battle, it is unacceptable for a more senior officer to recognize a dilemma, envision a solution and then latently sit back and not affect the outcome as a result of a perceived “General Officer gentlemen command culture”. In a period in which subordinates lives are at stake, not only was it understandable if the CINC would have usurped the Corps or Division Commanders authority but expected as the officer overall responsible for the campaign. General Hamilton should have initially stepped in upon recognizing the probable loss of life at such areas as Suvla Bay and “Y” Beach and at the next available opportunity emplaced a competent officer such as his second in command or chief of staff.

Initially the CINC had requested talented General Officers as he realized that the amphibious landing would require experienced leaders with initiative. Lord Kitchner’s disapproval of Hamilton’s by-name-requests for Division and Corps Commanders invariably had a negative effect on the campaign. However, as soon as Hamilton was notified that he was not going to receive his desired list of General Officers, it became his responsibility as the CINC to take the expected and feasible steps to compensate for his deficiency in General Officer talent. General Hamilton failed to rise to the occasion and overcome this adversity.

General Hamilton had many tools or methods to overcome his subordinate General Officer leadership challenges and prevent failures in command. As the CINC he was charged to organize and develop his assigned officers and staff to function and execute the campaign. As the CINC he was empowered by the Strategic level command to redistribute talent, replace and empower subordinate commanders to accomplish the

national objectives. General Hamilton possessed the necessary talent in such officers as Commodore Keyes. If these more junior yet, effective leaders were emplaced in critical positions of influence such as the chief of staff of the main effort at “Y” Beach, the CINC could have marginalized senior officer inaction.

The CINC could have ensured a unity of effort by insisting on briefbacks or confirmation briefs from subordinate leaders followed by close supervision during critical periods of the campaign in which that particular unit’s actions directly influence the entire operational battlespace. General Hamilton attempted to command from a distance and through consensus as opposed to holding leaders accountable. He should have directly effected their decisions by marginalizing their incompetence. A more hands on approach would have been enough to tip the scales in favor of the allies. A critical failure on behalf of the CINC was his reluctance to push his subordinates even when it became evident that their advance was crucial to the success of the campaign.

In accordance with the WWI era British Officer command cultures, Hamilton chose to remain stagnant on the *HMS Queen Elizabeth* miles from the battle or on the island of Imbros (20 miles from the battlefield) in a period of warfare with limited communications. The *HMS Queen Elizabeth* was engaged in providing vital naval gunfire support for the southern landing site and could not maneuver throughout the AOR. The CINC should have chosen a less vital ship that could have moved from landing site to landing site without effecting the operation enabling him to monitor the battles and provide much needed leadership. The CINC was aware of passing opportunities but chose to allow his subordinates to continue their planned execution and not employ simple principles of flexibility and agility to exploit success. Again, General Hamilton

continued to fail by not providing adequate guidance and communication of a clear intent with a follow-up to ensure synchronization.

As discussed earlier, although General Hamilton was aware of his assigned Corps Commanders' weaknesses and lack of combat experience, he chose to command from a distant island. At the time of the critical Suvla Bay landings, he chose to locate his headquarters on the island of Imbros. The General later justified his distant supervision by explaining that "General Stopford was within an hour's run of me and knew perfectly well that I should be delighted to see him at any time."³⁷ Additionally, General Hamilton allowed General Stopford to command from a ship in a period in which staffs were forced to communicate by ship-to-shore via untimely runners transported by rowboat.³⁸ This distant management added to the fog of war and resulted in the lack of timely situational awareness. General Hamilton should have forced the main effort commander, General Stopford, ashore and utilized the available tactical landline cable to command and control from a close-in ship. The CINC did not have the luxury of reach-back communications enjoyed by modern-day commanders and should have taken steps to overcome this lack of technology by locating himself close to the most critical action or main effort.

Campaign Concept/Objectives

The commanders and staff had a viable plan with attainable objectives. Many of the planned advances achieved initial success on landing at the beachheads. Turkish officers noted that naval gunfire support had some effect in reducing the defenses, but felt fortunate that the bombardment was short-lived. As stated earlier, the cooperative

³⁷ Eliot A. Cohen and John Gooch, *Military Misfortunes* (New York: The Free Press, 1990), p 149

³⁸ Mason, USN. "Operational Aspects of the Dardanelles Campaign, 1915," p. 18.

relationship between the Navy and the Army was exemplary. The feints and demonstrations were initially effective in delaying the Turkish forces from deploying to reinforce defenses. Despite successes, the Allied leadership committed errors that ended in failures. General Hamilton did not keep an adequate reserve that would enable him to exploit success during the initial landings. The allies chose to send additional forces to perform demonstrations in support of the main effort. The original plan called for two feints. He could have redirected one of the feints and still achieved the desired results with the enemy's reserve. A reserve force would have given him invaluable flexibility upon recognizing locations of successful penetrations. Additionally, Allied staffs planned as though the decisive point was a successful beach landing and not attaining command of the high ground above the beachheads. Commanders deployed slightly beyond the beach and stopped, ceasing vital momentum.

Intelligence Estimate/Anticipation

Anticipation and intelligence estimates are interdependent throughout the art of warfare. Commanders and staffs develop contingencies and branch and sequels in an attempt to be prepared and anticipate any situations that may occur on the battlefield. As per JP 3-0, commanders must continue to remain informed and alert for the unexpected of the fog of war and prepared for any opportunities to exploit situations.³⁹ Commanders must remain informed on the situation on the battlefield by communicating with staffs, subordinates and today with coalition partners that may have unique cultural insights. Today, Allied forces minimize unanticipated enemy actions by remaining on the offensive and retaining the initiative.

³⁹ U.S. Department of Defense. Joint Staff, *Joint Publication 3-0*. (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Defense, 2001), Chp II, Sec 2.

Although intelligence is not a formal facet of operational art, it is imperative that an evaluation must be conducted of what information and intelligence the CINC and his staff possessed or should have possessed during the Gallipoli Campaign. From the first day of our careers and until retirement we understand the premium placed on accurate information and intelligence regarding friendly and enemy forces and terrain. The art of intelligence preparation of the battlefield during the commander's estimate is one that must be developed. An operational commander must never underestimate his enemy and the effects of the terrain on friend and foe.

Due to operational arrogance and the past failures of the Turkish Armed Forces in the Balkans and Libya, the Allied Commanders initially believed that Turkish resolve would be weak at best. As evidenced throughout history, there is a notable difference between a man defending his homeland and a man defending a foreign battlefield. Many fatal mistakes were made in calculating the level of resistance of the Turkish ground forces as the Allied forces experienced a different soldier fighting in the Dardanelles than that of the Balkans. This led to unanticipated Turkish resolve and stiff resistance.

A lack of appreciation of the Turkish will, operational arrogance and not attaining vital information on the enemy's composition, disposition and strength resulted in the Allies not being prepared with a viable ground force. Erroneously believing that there would be little resistance, Lord Kitchener did not initially assign the naval campaign vital ground units and a commander at the beginning of operations (recall that General Hamilton arrived later in the Naval advance). Had the entire team been present from the commencement they could have immediately begun a contingency ground effort. After the unsuccessful naval advance, the allies returned to Egypt to train and prepare their

ground forces. This provided the Turks invaluable time to redeploy their forces. Had Hamilton realized that von Sanders' forces were in Constantinople and the lack of preparation of defenses, General Hamilton would not have insisted on redeploying to Egypt. Despite the fact that his force was poorly loaded and ill-prepared, they would potentially have proven sufficient to overcome the few enemy in the area of operations and established an operational foothold for capital ships to continue.

The commanders and staffs had inaccurate maps with very little information on the enemy locations. Many of the sketches and maps did not have contour intervals. This proved difficult for tactical commanders to overcome. There were reports of utter amazement and surprise upon reaching the beachheads despite the fact that the amphibious and naval forces had months to gather intelligence on the area of operation. The allies did not launch any efforts (ground or naval) in an attempt to gain information on the terrain beyond the beachheads. As stated earlier, the staffs did not utilize vital information gained from air assets. In not adequately studying the terrain, friendly forces and respecting Turkish resolve, they did not give the enemy and terrain a vote.

In studying General Hamilton's initial amphibious plan and its success in initially confusing his adversary and his reserve, I conclude that the CINC anticipated the actions and maneuver of the reserve. General Hamilton's vision and experience enabled him to develop a plan that would successfully deceive his adversary and force the enemy to delay the deployment of the reserve. However Hamilton failed to envision the possibilities of success, such as at "Y" Beach, in his concept of the operation and continued his perceived role as a commander in setting the general objectives and then leave his staff and subordinate commanders to figure out the details. Additionally, the

CINC and his staff anticipated the major enemy deployments but did not continue to maintain open lines of communications with his subordinate tactical commanders to both confirm his estimates and order his forces to exploit initial Allied success. The CINC chose to continue to have his subordinates develop the situation with little situational awareness. He failed to gain and process intelligence and conduct continuous intelligence preparation of the battlefield resulting in Allied inaction during vital periods of the ground offensive.

Decisive Point

US Army FM 100-5 defines Decisive Point, a vital operational facet, as “a point, usually geographical in nature, that when retained, provides a commander with a marked advantage over his opponent. Decisive points could also include other physical elements such as enemy formations, command posts, and communications nodes”.⁴⁰ A failure in the CINC’s operational art was the identification of the decisive points. The initial Allied estimate of the operational decisive point during the Naval advance was neutralizing Turkish gun emplacements in the immediate vicinity and clearing naval mines. After the Allies unsuccessful first Naval advance, the Naval staff reassessed that the decisive point was the more distant high ground and mobile guns that they believed commanded the straits. In my assessment, the initial estimate was correct. Later studies proved that the more distant high ground did not command the straits as these areas were not viable vantage points for direct or indirect weapons systems.

General Hamilton and his staff had estimated yet another decisive point and planned accordingly. They had estimated that they would gain a “marked” advantage in securing the beachheads, leading them to victory. They estimated that the enemy would turn and

⁴⁰ Department of the Army, *Field Manual 100-5 Operations*, 1993, Glossary G-1-4.

run when the organized Allied forces hit the beach. This is evident as planning concluded with the beach landing. The commander and his staff did not plan any measures to extend the amphibious forces advance beyond the beachhead. This resulted in the Allies reaching their culmination point soon after landings at the beach. If the allies had continued to focus on their original Naval advance and not been sidetracked in the attempt to secure the more distant high ground with a ground element, they would have been successful in forcing a naval breakout. This change in estimate led to the Allied defeat.

Centers of Gravity

The Joint Staff Officer's Guide defines Center of Gravity as "those characteristics, capabilities, or localities from which a military force derives its freedom of action, physical strength, or will to fight".⁴¹ The allies correctly recognized Constantinople as the Turkish strategic center of gravity and key to victory in World War I. The largest Turkish population and religious center, modern day Istanbul, provided access to the Bosphorus and a vital gateway to the Middle East from Europe. Evidence of the significance of Constantinople to the Turks is the initial disposition of the majority of Turkish ground forces at the commencement of the Gallipoli Campaign. Upon recognition that the allies were attempting to force the straits, the young Turks (the name given to the reigning Turkish leadership), immediately deployed the strategic reserve in an effort to halt the naval advance to Constantinople.

The Turkish operational center of gravity in the defense of the sea lines of communications of the Dardanelles, remained the artillery throughout the entire

⁴¹ National Defense University-Joint Forces Staff College, *The Joint Staff Officer's Guide 2000*, Glossary, G-20.

campaign. The Allied ground forces commander would effectively convince the naval commander that it had become the Turkish Army reserve forces upon the arrival of the enemy ground forces to the area. This would lead to the ultimate failure of the campaign to reach Constantinople. The Allied campaign was sidetracked in prosecuting the ground advance and losing sight of the ultimate goal of capital ships negotiating the straits to bombard the Turkish capital. Turkish ground forces were ineffective against the Allied operational center of gravity, the British and French capital ships. As a result, my assessment of the enemy COG of the Turkish maritime defense of the Dardanelles remained the enemy artillery pieces.

Logistics

Clausewitz sums up the challenges that an attacking *ground* force must consider in planning an operational level of war:

A defending army can always use supplies that it has been able to stockpile in advance; so the defenders will not be lacking in necessities. This is so especially for troops stationed in their own country... The attacker, on the other hand, leaves his sources of supply behind... Under these conditions shortages and difficulties will be the rule.⁴² Carl von Clausewitz

This would prove true throughout the campaign and was compounded as a result of naval transportation limitations. Inadequate attention was placed on logistical planning. Soldiers were forced to subsist on grossly inadequate amounts of water and food. In extremely hot conditions, the soldiers were rationed to a canteen cup a day and in some periods lived on a meal every 2-3 days. Medical evacuation and treatment was not adequately planned as evidenced by the fact that the senior Medical Officer was dispatched from London at the end of the naval advance stage of the campaign, leaving

⁴² Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, (Edited by Micheal Howard and Peter Pact), (Princeton: University Press, 1976), p. 339.

him little time to plan, gather stockpiles and establish an adequate medical force protection concept. Accounts describe that the amount of casualties from the initial engagements quickly overburdened the hastily conceived medical evacuation plan. Many soldiers died due to diseases as a result of the complete lack of preventative medicine, prophylaxis and having to live in close proximity to human feces. Adequate medicines were not stockpiled for the soldiers. Very little attention was paid to indigenous insects and diseases.

During the initial naval advance of the campaign very little attention was placed on combat loading and combat logistical planning. Much of the equipment and ammunition was separated from the ground forces. Cannon and artillery weapons were placed on separate ships from the ammunition. Medical supplies were not planned to accompany each maneuver group. As stated earlier, as a result of the hasty and unorganized loading process the Allied forces were forced to redeploy to Egypt to reload, providing the Turkish forces vital time. Logistics proved to be a critical vulnerability in the Gallipoli Campaign.

Chapter 9 – Conclusion: Strategic Consequences of an Operational Level Failure

The Dardanelles Campaign, one of the first major joint-combined amphibious operations in modern warfare, has many lessons for present day operational level commanders and staff planners. Gallipoli is a good example of how a campaign with attainable objectives and adequate resources could result in a catastrophic failure due to a lack of operational level planning, communication and leadership; *Operational Art*. General Hamilton's shortcomings in leadership, overly optimistic assumptions, poor

subordinate/superior communication, lack of battlefield synchronization - *-Operational Art-* - are directly responsible for the Allied failure at Gallipoli.

In *Military Misfortunes The Anatomy of Failure in War*, Eliot A. Cohen and John Gooch summarize that military failures generally fall into the two categories of *defeats* or *lost victories*. The latter describes battlefield situations in which a force has within its sphere of influence the advantage of probability to achieve a victory against an inferior adversary. In other words “victory is there’s for the taking or losing”. Throughout the history of warfare, superior forces with a logical advantage have been defeated as a result of a variety of conditions such as the friction of war. Cohen and Gooch define these “military misfortunes” as the failure of a force to achieve what might have been reasonably expected of it. These descriptions define the Allied Task Force, which at Suvla Bay for the initial 48 hours, enjoyed a ten-to-one advantage over an inferior trained and surprised Turkish enemy.

Eliot A. Cohen and John Gooch analyzed why a superior Allied Task Force with attainable objectives and adequate resources failed in the Gallipoli Campaign. They argued that these “military misfortunes” frequently cannot be attributed to one Commander, but to the organization as a whole. Cohen and Gooch attempted to describe these critical failures throughout the organization in a Jominian-like “Matrix of Failure” in which every level from High Command through Operational Command to the smallest tactical unit reflect a failure.⁴³ Although extensive, the matrix does not describe the power of personalities and interaction effects throughout the different levels. These multi-dimensional interactions and conditions cannot be accurately recorded in a linear matrix.

⁴³ Cohen and Gooch, *Military Misfortunes*, p. 147.

The matrix does not accurately record the central core Commander-In-Chief leadership effect as the conduit to all levels of superior, peer and subordinate levels of command.

Within *Military Misfortunes The Anatomy of Failure in War*, the authors described a CINC critical failure to adapt to a changing military circumstance. Cohen and Gooch accurately described General Hamilton's critical failure to set conditions for the reserve to exploit or adapt to an opportunity such as Suvla Bay or "Y" Beach. The CINC's shortcomings did not build any flexibility within employed amphibious forces or an operational reserve, resulting in a systemic organizational weakness to adapt to the changing military situation at Gallipoli.

Future Joint Force Commanders will be assigned available force commanders, frequently not their ideal selections of leaders. Yesterday's effective leaders and modern day Joint Commanders share an affinity in effectively recognizing subordinates strengths and weaknesses and empowering and marginalizing accordingly. General Hamilton clearly did not display this virtue. General Sir Ian Hamilton, steadfast in British military tradition, was hesitant to question his superiors and subordinates alike despite his recognition of their timidity and inexperience in combat. In my concurrence with Cohen and Gooch, the CINC should have fired or closely managed General Hunter-Weston and General Stopford.

The Gallipoli Campaign was a costly failure in that it had very little effect on the outcome of World War I. The campaign resulted in an estimated 120,000 British, 27,000 French, 26,000 Australian and 7500 New Zealander casualties. Most sobering is that almost ten percent of the male population of Australia and New Zealand became

casualties of the Gallipoli Campaign. No less significant were the 250,000 Turkish casualties including 87,000 dead.⁴⁴

Gallipoli resulted in a loss of credibility for many reputations, especially that of Kitchener, whose drowning on the *HMS Hampshire* saved him from the ultimate ruin of his place in British Military history. Winston Churchill immediately lost his cabinet position as a result of the failure and the ruling political party was forced to accept a domestic coalition position on future war strategies. Fortunately for the future of Europe, he regained his credibility and returned to government in 1917. General Sir Ian Hamilton was relieved and never again given a command. German General Liman von Sanders continued to command Turkish forces until he was defeated at Allenby in 1918.⁴⁵ General Mustafa Kemal Bey, the energetic driving-force behind the heroic Turkish defense of the peninsula, rose to be Ataturk (father of the Turks), becoming Turkey's most famous leader.

A strategic result of the Allied failure in the Dardanelles was that Bulgaria entered into an alliance with the Central Powers, complicating the Allied effort in the Balkans.⁴⁶ Gallipoli was a major factor in the emergence of a new Turkish nationhood and forged a sense of national identity for Australia and New Zealand. The ANZAC reputation of individual courage and resolve endures. The day of the landings, 25 April, is celebrated as ANZAC Day, Australia's proudest anniversary.

Interesting counter-factual questions that will never be answered are what if Vice-Admiral De Robeck would have pressed on with the naval advance prior to, or during, or after the ground offensive? What would have been the results if General Hamilton would

⁴⁴ Haythornwaite, *Gallipoli 1915, Frontal Assault on Turkey*, p 90.

⁴⁵ Ibid, p. 90.

⁴⁶ Alan Moorehead, *Gallipoli*, (New York: Harper Brothers, New York, 1956), p. 22.

have effectively communicated and supervised his intent to all tactical commanders in immediately attacking the high ground upon securing the beachhead? Would the allies have ended the war early? Lady Spencer-Churchill, widow of the Great and Honorable Winston Churchill, summed up my conclusion and her late husbands feelings of

Gallipoli:

“Nothing in his whole life gave my husband greater anxiety and unhappiness than the Gallipoli Campaign. I still believe, as he did, that the idea was right even if the execution was wrong.”⁴⁷

⁴⁷ Bush. *Gallipoli*, p. 1.

Appendix I

Chronology of Events

1 January 1915	Russia requests the allies to initiate offensive against Turkey
5 January 1915	Admiral Carden's Dardanelles Naval Concept is received in London
13 January 1915	War Council approves Gallipoli Campaign
19 February 1915	Allied Naval Task Force bombards outer forts. Minesweeping operations begin
8 March 1915	Turks lay new line of mines parallel to the Straits
12 March 1915	Lord Kitchener announces deployment of 70,000 troops to Gallipoli
18 March 1915	Vice-Admiral de Robeck commences new attack on the Straits. three battleships sunk, three others damaged due to mines.
23 March 1915	General Hamilton/Admiral de Robeck meet. Decide to conduct an amphibious landing
25 April 1915	Allied forces land at Cape Helles and Gaba Tepe (ANZAC Cove)
6 August 1915	Allied forces land at Suvla Bay in an attempt to break deadlock
16 October 1915	General Hamilton relieved of command; replaced by General Monro
19 December 1915	ANZAC and Suvla Bay evacuated
9 January 1916	Cape Helles evacuated

Appendix II

British Strategic Civilian Leadership

Prime Minister: Sir H. H. Asquith

Foreign Secretary: Sir Edward Grey

Secretary of State for War: Field Marshal Lord Horatio Herbert Kitchener

First Lord of the Admiralty: Sir Winston Churchill

First Sea Lord: Lord John Arbuthnot Fisher

Allied Operational Military Leadership

CINC, Ground Forces/Mediterranean Expeditionary Force: General Sir Ian Hamilton

Cdr, Australian-New Zealand (ANZAC) Corps: LtGen Sir William Birdwood

Cdr, VIII Corps (29th Division): LtGen Sir Aylmer Hunter-Weston

Cdr, IX Corps: LtGen Sir Frederick Stopford

CINC, British/French Fleet: Rear Admiral Sackville Carden (replaced)

CINC, British/French Fleet: Vice Admiral Sir John de Robeck

Turkish Strategic Civilian Leadership

Political Leadership: Young Turks

Political Leader of the Young Turks: Talaat Bay

War Minister: General Enver Pasha

German/Turkish Operational Military Leadership

Cdr, Turkish 5th Army: General Liman von Sanders, Germany

Cdr, 19th Division: General Mustafa Kemal, "Attaturk"

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