

would obviously have increased considerably) to expose the whole story for the fabrication that it was.

It has already been stated (in chapter 8) that there is no mention of the *Sydney* having signalled the letters IK in the interrogation evidence, or even in Detmers's book written fourteen years after the event; furthermore, Herr Ahlback stated categorically in a recent interview that he knew nothing of them, and if they were unknown to his Chief Yeoman of Signals it must be presumed that they were unknown to Detmers also.

How then can their presence in the Naval Intelligence reconstruction of the action be accounted for? There is, I suggest, only one possible answer: they were planted there by *Naval Intelligence itself*. Moreover, if we look again more closely at the relevant sentence in the reconstruction, we will even find a tacit admission to this effect: '*Sydney apparently* (my italics) made IK . . .' The Germans could not have 'appeared' to say that *Sydney* made IK; they either said so or they didn't, and all the evidence indicates that they didn't. They were inserted, therefore, for the very good reason that without them the rest of the story could not be made to stand up.

Now at last we also have an explanation of the puzzling letters EBFS which, it will be remembered, Detmers claimed to have been transmitted in his Q signal. When a merchant ship sent out such a signal, it was standard procedure to include with it her secret callsign (the fact that the *Komata* did so has been already mentioned). The obvious construction to be put on these letters, therefore, is that they represented the secret callsign of the *Straat Malakka* as Detmers understood it to be. On the day of the action, however, the *Straat Malakka's* secret callsign happened to be not EBFS, but IIKP. In other words, it had changed since Detmers first received knowledge of it (in all probability from the *Atlantis* on 19 April); he was not to know this, because for security reasons secret callsigns were changed not at set intervals, but irregularly. By quoting the letters EBFS, therefore, he immediately betrayed his story, and in order to rescue it the navy were obliged to replace them in the evidence with the correct ones; hence the equivocal 'apparently'.