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INTERROGATION OF OFFICERS OF RAIDER No. 41
AT PERTH ON 1st DECEMBER, 1941.

Fliegerhorst Kommandatur Delmenhorst - Doctor WAGNER.

55 years of age; A meteorologist, with the rank of Commander although an official of the German Naval Meteorological Service. He is not an officer, and his name is not shown in the Navy List. Was only the adviser to the Captain on meteorological matters, and had nothing to do with the crew. He was previously in the South Atlantic on the Civil Air Line. He usually advised the Captain regarding the use of the aeroplane, but in the last day near Australia the plane had not been used because of the swell.

He was below decks during the action, helping the Doctor, and saw nothing of it. The alarm was given at 1700 hours. There were three wounded in the sick bay from shell splinters, one having been dangerously wounded when going after from the bridge. When WAGNER went on deck again it was dark, and the Cruiser was astern of the raider, and on fire amidships in two places, the bridge and directly behind one of the funnels. She was about five miles away. He heard that the Cruiser's aeroplane had been on fire when they tried to launch her, and that it exploded during the action. The Raider blew up at 0200H/20 by which time he was about 400 metres away from the ship. He thinks the Raider was blown up by the Captain, but that it was very possible that their own mines had made the big explosion. He heard no explosion from the Cruiser.

He also gave weather advice for mine laying, and depended on his own observations to determine the weather. No mines had been laid by the Raider. He had very little to do as the ship was mostly in the Tropics. They had been near Sumatra, but he had not seen it, as he was below decks. They had not done anything for the last two months, so they could refit their engine. Last ship encountered was the "Embiricos" in September. Prisoners were sent with Supply Ship to Germany from Sumatra in August and October. Supply Ship brought oil and stores, but never brought any mail. When asked whether they really came from Germany he said that he doubted it himself. No passenger ships had been attacked. No flying had taken place in October or November, for though the sea was not often too rough, there was a swell in a different direction which made taking off and alighting too dangerous.

When they encountered the "Sydney" they had previously been steering an Easterly course to the Western Australian coast. He obtained the position of the action after leaving the Raider, and stated that it took place about 120 miles from the coast. He says that the Raider fired first, when the Cruiser was about 3000 metres (2.5 miles) away, and he had heard that one torpedo on the surface had passed close astern of the Raider in the second phase of the action.

Sub-Lieutenant Wilhelm Christian BUNJES:

39 years of age; married, three children, - Not a Member of the Party. Was Chief Officer of the "PRETORIA" German-Afrika Line, and continued in the ship until June, 1940, when they were used in Stettin and Dantzig. Whilst on leave was called to the Navy as Prize Officer, all the prizes were empty ships, so there was no sense in taking them home. Only one, the "CANADOLITE", with a crew of one officer and 15 ratings put on board from the Raider, was sent home. The Captain, Chief Engineer, Gunner and Wireless Officer were taken prisoners.

There were five Prize Officers on board, and they did nothing except two hours a day look out. The movements of the ship were kept very secret, and the Prize Officers did not know a thing. The Captain only would allow to read the press. Their battle station was at the after end of the ship, but they had no special job, just to be ready

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for an emergency. Last ship they sunk was the "Embiricos" - she had all her lights on, and was seen at night on the Mombasa-Ceylon or Bombay route, somewhere near the Maldives, otherwise she would have escaped. Some prisoners from the "Embiricos" were sent home by supply ships - these supply ships came from Japan or South America. Last regular supply ship they saw was in the South Atlantic, the ship that took the prisoners from "Embiricos" home being a German ship on its way home from Japan or South America. About 70 prisoners had been sent in the last three ships. Raider's crew were not allowed to send any letters home by the last ship, and had no notice that it had arrived in Germany.

An ordinary Cruiser took their letters home the first time from the Atlantic, somewhere North of the Equator. Another ship took letters home was a little tanker that had been in the Azores and Las Palmas - he thought this tanker was from a Baltic country, but he was not sure.

The Raider passed over the Equator several times whilst in the Atlantic, but only passed once by Cape Town.

The Raider was about 120 miles from the coast, steering North and in position 26 S. 111 E. when the Cruiser was sighted 45 degrees on the starboard bow - the Raider had been for some time on the same course previous to this. A petty officer in the crew's next first sighted the cruiser and thought it was a sailing ship. It was very clear weather, and the Raider's speed was 10 knots. When the ship sighted was seen to be a Cruiser, the Raider altered course to S.W. and increased to full speed (15-16 knots). At this time the Cruiser was from 20 to 25 miles away. The Cruiser approached rapidly, and at about 7 miles began flashing. Raider had the Dutch flag, and signalled that she was the "STRAAT MALAKKA". When the ships were about 1200 metres apart on parallel courses and abeam, the Cruiser asked for the secret call. The Raider opened the covering plates of the guns and fired the first shots (less than a minute). Range-finding was carried out with the little range finders. The Cruiser's first salvo hit the Raider amidships in the engine room near the funnel. Raider was hit three or four times, although some salvos from the Cruiser went over. After four or five salvos the Cruiser turned and seemed to attempt to ram the Raider, and passed under the Raider's stern, thus enabling the port guns of the Raider to fire. The Cruiser was enveloped in smoke, on fire, and down by the bow. The Raider had stopped. At about 1740H the fire in the Raider had started and something was wrong in the engine room. The actual action lasted about 20 minutes.

When the Raider was abandoned, the starboard boats could not be lowered, so only the port ones were used. Communication with the after part of the ship was impossible because of the fire. The boat in which BUNJES was sent had hardly any provisions, very little water and no sail. He got his boat away from the ship with his six oars and picked up other survivors. Raider exploded at about 1230. During the night they saw flash light and green and white rockets. Next day a German boat came alongside and gave them some milk and a piece of sail.

The fuller equipped lifeboats were stowed in hatches and were got out by hand with tackles. The rockets seen during the night may have come from these lifeboats. There were 72 men in the boat from which they obtained the milk and sail.

On Friday morning (21st) they saw a big freighter which didn't see them. On Saturday morning a big four funnel ship, probably the "AQUITANIA", at a distance of from 7 to 8 miles, on Monday morning a bomber aeroplane circled round them, on Tuesday morning a tanker passed without seeing them, and on Thursday morning another aeroplane (black and yellow marks). Boat made sign "no water" with canvas and red paint. Same day they were picked up.