

26 Clarendon Gardens London, W9 1AZ

13 November, 1994

Dear Otto

I hope this letter finds you and Marina well and not too exhausted by preparations for this year's Komoran reunion.

Thank you for returning the video tape of the Sydney/Kormoran documentary. In your letter you asked for a copy of Tom Frame's book HMAS Sydney - Loss & Controversy, so I asked an Australian friend to send me two copies. The enclosed copy is a gift from me to the Kormoran Association. Otto, the least I can do to repay your Association's generosity in inviting me to you 1990 reunion.

Having read the book (quickly) I am at a loss to know why he felt it worth publishing although he does steer a course midway between the Montgomery and Winter books.

For the record Otto, it is not important for me to know whether your Captain behaved correctly in signalling his nationality before firing on Sydney, as for Kormoran the situation was desperate with surrender or a fight being the only options. Given that to fight would be against overwhelming odds, the argument about when the battle ensign was struck was hardly relevant. One fact is indisputable; Burnett put his ship in danger when danger was avoidable. Most probably he took this course with the approval of most of the executive officers on Sydney's bridge resulting in the death of my father and all his crew mates.

Until recently, Australia has been an isolated and inward looking country. Because of this some of the post-war controversy in Australia surrounding the loss of Sydney stems from the inability of some sections of Australian society to accept that they could possibly be outwitted in any field of endeavour by foreigners, especially Europeans. The Sydney Research Group is a manifestation of this attitude.

Otto, please convey my greetings and best wishes to your Association which I assume will be meeting this weekend.