

Words, spoken on the welcome evening of the KORMORAN reunion,
Hotel Stadt Altona, 19 November, 1989



Dear comrades, dear KORMORAN-widows, dear guests,

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At the opening of our this year's reunion I bid you all a sincere welcome. I am glad that you were not afraid of expenditures and exertion to start on your sometimes rather long way to Hamburg in November, a month that can very often ~~rather unfriendly~~ with its weather. *v* Your wish to spend some nice and gay hours among good comrades and dear friends was much stronger than the eventually bad November weather. Since we meet for our reunions in this hotel the number of participants has increased regularly, tonight we are *95* persons.

I welcome especially heartily a guest who had to start on a long way for Hamburg. His name is Edmund Jones, he comes from England, and his journey to Hamburg has a very special reason. His father served as a C.P.O. on H.M.A.S. SYDNEY and sank with his ship after the engagement with our KORMORAN. And now the son wants to be informed by us about the truth, about the truth from our first sighting of the SYDNEY until her disappearance beyond the horizon. Mr Jones owns the book by Mrs Winter and that by Michael Montgomery, but he wants to hear from you, as the participants in the engagement, the real facts. He, too, is one of the victims of the campaign of defamation that is still today carried out against us by certain circles in Australia, under which especially the next of kin of SYDNEY's crew have to suffer. I therefore ask you, especially those comrades who can talk to Mr Jones in English to help him in finding the truth. In remembrance of the KORMORAN reunion 1989 I present this photocopy of the coat of arms of H.M.A.S. SYDNEY to Mr Jones.

This year our reunion coincides with the Memorial Day for all fallen German soldiers of WW1 and WW2. Tonight we shall therefore not only commemorate our comrades who died during the past year, but all comrades who served on our ship at some time; from the first dead, our comrade Erich Dembnicki who was killed in an accident during a torpedo exercise on the Baltic Ocean, from our 80 fallen comrades in the action against the SYDNEY to those comrades who lost their lives during the past year.

Since the end of 1988 died
Rudolf Hagge on 13 December 1988
Herbert Krahn on 22 December 1988
Willi Galuschka on 15 March 1989
Hans Köblitz on 20 July 1989 and
Walter Lorenz ~~XX~~ in the night from the first to the second of November 1989.

Käthe Köblitz, the wife of our comrade Hans Köblitz, died half a year ahead of him, on 13 January, 1989, and
Elisabeth Kurz, the wife of our comrade Hans Kurz, died on 6 February, *into our commemoration.* 1989.

Tonight I want to include the dead complement of H.M.A.S. SYDNEY. On the 19th of November 1941 her crew fought as bravely as we did, and her men were as willing and prepared to sacrifice their lives for their country as we were prepared for a sacrifice for our country. I herewith ask you to raise from your seats in commemoration of our dear KORMORAN comrades and to honour the brave SYDNEY crew.

I thank you.

Please, allow me some words about the events in the GDR. For the third time during this century endangered parts of the German people have fought successfully against their fate. In 1920 France received the sovereignty over the Saar region, including the right of working the coal mining district, by means of the ~~XXXX~~ Treaty of Versailles. But in 1935 during an internationally supervised and controlled plebiscite 91% of the Saar population decided for the return to Germany. After WW2 France again received the sovereignty over the Saar region including the right of working the coal mining district. But in 1956 France again received a similarly unequivocal answer from the population in the Saar district.

