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THE AUSTRALIAN FINANCE

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SUBMISSION No 66R

12/2/99

2 Urara Road
Avalon 2107
Sydney
Tel: 02 9918-959314/12/99
Defence Sub-committee,

Dear Ms Towner.

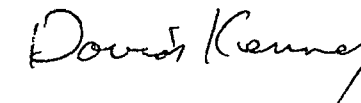
As the inquiry wraps up I would like to suggest that the recently noted dotted lines from the engagement area in Brennecke's route illustration to the east-south-east could well be a direction of lifeboats other than those that landed at Red Bluff and 17-Mile Well, or were picked up by ships to the north east of the suggested battle site. But I think we also need to consider that Detmers might have headed Kormoran in that east-south-east direction to try to find a temporary anchorage to effect repairs if he could, or better secure his ship from fire. I say this after the observation of the name Port Gregory and Geraldton on Ruge's war theatre illustration, and am mindful of Japanese use of Jurien Bay in World War I. If Detmers finally had to order his remaining nucleus of 120 or so hard men off the ship in shallower water closer to shore he certainly would not have been talking about it to his captors. Kormoran blowing up might also explain the flashes and explosions seen and heard from land that night. Equipment and craft from the earlier engagement would agree with that drift pattern while the positions given closer in shore might also be explained.

In the message of the 23rd from the Admiralty the Steiermark is described, but badly misspelled. Perhaps this is the reason it is still in the records.

Also, a review of interviews shows that Harman wireless operator Alun Morris-Rees gives Neil Pennicuik as a separate source for Sydney wirelessing that she was about to open fire and that the full message was lost in scenes as described by Bob Mason and Judy Alley. Morris-Rees also describes a simple emergency code for an engagement, giving type of adversary and position, which could be easily read and would have been quickly retransmitted to other stations. I think we have to consider that Judy Alley is conceding to the world that there was a mix up, while being loyal to her shipmates with so much doubt in the air. Morris-Rees also refers to having heard from Jimmy Dawson at breakfast in the mess that a message had been lost during a Hamilton watch but he cannot recall exactly when the incident occurred.

Yours faithfully,

David Kennedy



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