

THE SECRETARY
HMAS SYDNEY II
COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

JUSTUS ANGWIN

20-10-2008

THESE ADVICES ARE SEPARATE FROM MY SUBMISSION OF 3-6-08.

THE SERIOUS PROBLEMS, OF THE LOSS OF HMAS SYDNEY II ABOUT 19/11/41, INCLUDE THE ABSENCE OF WIRELESS SIGNALS. I SUBMIT A POSSIBLE EXPLANATION, BEFORE LEAVING FARMANVILLE ON 11/11/1941, Sydney was sending wireless signals, but on her departure radio silence applied. THE TELEGRAPHY SECTION THUS KNEW THAT, MOST LIKELY, FOR MORE THAN A WEEK THEY MUST NOT TRANSMIT.

WHEN ON RADIO SILENCE, IT IS VITAL TO AVOID ACCIDENTAL TRANSMISSION. TWO STEPS COULD BE TAKEN, THEREFORE - FIRSTLY, REMOVE (AND PERHAPS LOCK AWAY) THE MOVEABLE SECTION OF THE MORSE KEYS; SECONDLY, ISOLATE THE TRANSMITTER(S). THIS WOULD REQUIRE A FEW MINUTES IF THERE WAS AN ORDER TO BREAK RADIO SILENCE, BUT THE CIRCUMSTANCES CAUSING SUCH ORDER WOULD HAVE BEEN NOTICED EARLIER.

FROM 11TH TO 19TH NOVEMBER, 1941, NOTHING OCCURRED TO JUSTIFY BREAKING RADIO SILENCE. AND THE ENCOUNTER BETWEEN Sydney AND KORMORAN WAS, INITIALLY, NOT A REASON EITHER - ESPECIALLY SINCE TRANSMISSION WOULD ALERT ANY OTHER RAIDER.

OF COURSE, ONCE Sydney BECAME SO SERIOUSLY DAMAGED AND ON FIRE, RADIO SILENCE OUGHT TO HAVE BEEN BROKEN - BY ORDER AND/OR BY THE DREAFFUL CIRCUMSTANCES.

BUT THE SURVIVING TELEGRAPHISTS WOULD BE FULLY ENGAGED IN THE VITAL FIRE-FIGHTING, SO, EVEN IF THE RADIO ROOM WAS AVAILABLE, THE FEW MINUTES REQUIRED TO GET TO TRANSMIT COULD NOT BE TAKEN AWAY FROM FIRE-FIGHTING ON A SINKING SHIP.

I RECOGNISE THAT THIS IS NO MORE THAN A POSSIBLE OR PLAUSIBLE EXPLANATION, BUT PERHAPS IT'S WORTH SCRUTINY.

YOURS SINCERELY

Justus Angwin



SUBM.005.0075_R