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Annex 8

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Professor Teruaki Kawano,
Military History Department,
National Institute for Defence Studies,


Dear Professor Kawano,

I am writing an article about the loss of the Australian warship *HMAS Sydney*, which was sunk by the German raider *Kormoran* off Western Australia, about 150 miles south-west of Carnarvon, on November 19, 1941. There have been persistent claims in Australia that a Japanese submarine may have been involved in the attack on *Sydney*, although no one has been able to identify the Japanese submarine allegedly responsible. I find it very difficult to believe the claims about Japanese involvement but would like to lay the matter to rest once and for all.

I wonder if it might be possible to seek your help on this matter.

It is well known that Japan had 46 I-class submarines at the time of the outbreak of the Pacific War in December 1941. On pages 22-23 of *Battle Surface: Japan's Submarine War Against Australia* we reproduce a map showing the positions of 28 submarines in the period from about November 21. It would thus seem clear that none of these boats could have been in the vicinity of *HMAS Sydney* on November 19. The submarines attached to the Pearl Harbour attack were:

Second Submarine Group: *I-1, I-2, I-3, I-4, I-5, I-6* and *I-7*.

First Submarine Group: *I-9, I-15, I-17* and *I-25*.

Special Attack Force: *I-16, I-18, I-20, I-22* and *I-24*.

Third Submarine Group: *I-8, I-68, I-69, I-70, I-71, I-72, I-73, I-74* and *I-75*.

Submarine Reconnaissance Unit: *I-19, I-21* and *I-23*.

We also know that at this time the four minelaying submarines – *I-121, I-122, I-123* and *I-124* – were operating in the South China Sea area.

That accounts for 32 of Japan's 46 I-class submarines.

I wonder if it might be possible to establish the position of the other 14 ~~more~~ I-class boats on or about November 19.

Any assistance you might be able to provide on this matter would be deeply appreciated and would, I am sure, help end speculation in this country that a Japanese submarine attacked and sank an Australian warship three weeks *before* Pearl Harbour.

With best wishes and many thanks for any help you may be able to provide.

Yours sincerely,

David Jenkins