

## COMMISSION OF INQUIRY INTO THE LOSS OF HMAS SYDNEY II

Before The Hon TRH Cole AO RFD QC

Held at the Residence of Mr Heinrich Carl  
[REDACTED] Germany

Counsel Assisting: LEUT Matthew Tyson  
LEUT Stephen Harper

On Thursday, 3 July 2008  
(Day 6)

28 LEUT TYSON: Good morning, Herr Carl. My name is  
29 LEUT Matthew Tyson. I'm here with my colleague  
30 LEUT Stephen Harper and Herr Frank Thomas, interpreter.  
31

32 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Hello Mr. Carl. Good morning. I am here together  
33 with my colleague Mr. Stephen Harper. My name is Matthew Tyson and we are  
34 also accompanied by the interpreter Frank Thomas.  
35

36 LEUT TYSON: We're here on behalf of the Cole Commission of Inquiry to  
37 investigate and inquire into the circumstances surrounding  
38 the encounter between Sydney and Kormoran.  
39

40 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: We are here today to ask you some questions related  
41 to the Commission of Inquiry that was established to shed light upon the  
42 sinking of the Sydney and to shed light upon the battle between the  
43 Sydney and the Kormoran.  
44

45 LEUT TYSON: Also present is the Commissioner, the Honourable Terrence Cole  
46 QC.  
47

1 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Also present is the Chairman of the Commission, Mr.  
2 Terrence Roderick Hodson Cole.

3

4 LEUT TYSON: Sir, you have also seen a copy of the instrument of  
5 appointment and you've had the chance to review that with  
6 Herr Thomas.

7

8 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Besides, we have also presented to you our official  
9 certificate of appointment which has been translated to you by Mr. Thomas  
10 and which you have reviewed with him.

11

12 LEUT TYSON: We just need to attend to some formal matters about  
13 swearing evidence, and I might just ask Commissioner Cole  
14 to attend to that.

15

16 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Now , at this moment, we need to perform a few  
17 formalities concerning your sworn evidence. May I ask Mr. Cole to attend  
18 to the administration of the oath.

19

20 THE PRESIDENT: I have come to the home of Mr Heinrich  
21 Carl [REDACTED] in Germany to take his evidence in relation  
22 to the battle between HMAS Sydney and the Kormoran in 1941.  
23 Herr Carl, thank you for agreeing to see me and the other  
24 people here who are helping me.

25

26 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Hello Mr. Carl. I am here in the house of Mr. Carl  
27 [REDACTED]. Now, we would like you to be sworn in at this investigation  
28 [conducted] in relation to the circumstances that had lead to the loss of  
29 the Sydney in 1941 [and] that had arisen as a result of the encounter and  
30 the battle with the Kormoran. Mr. Carl, first of all I would like to  
31 thank you for having made yourself available to take part in this  
32 investigation.

33

34 THE PRESIDENT: Herr Carl is in his late

35

36 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Mr. Carl, you are in your eighties?

37

38 MR CARL: Eighty-eight.

39

40 CARL [GERMAN]: Eighty-eight.

41

42 THE PRESIDENT: Eighty-eight, yes. Herr Carl, I would ask  
43 you, if you would, please, to take the Bible and take an  
44 oath.

45

46 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Mr. Carl, I would like to ask you, if you would not  
47 mind, whether you would take an oath on the Bible, or would you rather

1 prefer to do it without the Bible?

2

3 CARL [GERMAN]: It is all the same to me.

4

5 MR CARL: I don't care, yes.

6

7 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Your evidence given here as a witness before the  
8 Commission will be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

9

10 <HEINRICH CARL, sworn:

11

12 CARL [GERMAN]: OK. So help me God, yes.

13

14 LEUT TYSON: Q. Herr Carl, could you please state your  
15 full name?

16

17 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Mr. Carl, could you please state your full name?

18

19 CARL [GERMAN]: Given Name Heinrich, and the [Surname] Carl with a "C".

20

21 A. First name Heinrich and then second, surname, is Carl  
22 with a "C".

23 Q. What is your address, sir?

24

25 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: What is your address?

26

27 CARL [GERMAN]: [REDACTED]

28

29 A. [REDACTED]

30 Q. Sir, what is your date of birth?

31

32 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: What is your exact date of birth?

33

34 CARL [GERMAN]: [REDACTED]

35

36 A. [REDACTED]

37 Q. Herr Carl, prior to the outbreak of World War II, what  
38 was your occupation, what were you doing?

39

40 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Mr. Carl, prior to the outbreak of World War II  
41 what was your occupation, what were you doing?

42

43 CARL [GERMAN]: Turner/machinist.

44

45 A. I was a machinist.

46

47

1 Q. How was it that you came to serve in the Kriegsmarine?

2

3 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: How did it come about that you were serving in the  
4 "Kriegsmarine" [German Navy]?

5

6 CARL [GERMAN]: Volunteered.

7

8 A. I volunteered.

9 Q. You were a sailor on the Kormoran. What division were  
10 you in on the Kormoran?

11

12 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: You were a sailor on the Kormoran. What was your  
13 exact task and position/role on board of the Kormoran?

14

15 CARL [GERMAN]: I was posted to work in the workshop, as engine room crew  
16 member in the workshop.

17

18 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Crew workshop, or what is the name of it?

19

20 CARL [GERMAN]: Workshop. For the engine.

21

22 A. I was ordered to work in the workshop that belonged to  
23 the engine.

24

25 Q. You were a machine Gefreiter?

26

27 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Your position, your rank, it was  
28 "Maschinenobergefreiter" [leading seaman in the engine room], is it  
29 correct?

30

31 CARL [GERMAN]: Yes.

32

33 A. Yes.

34

35 Q. Can you explain on a day-to-day basis what sort of  
36 things did you do on the Kormoran?

37 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Could you tell me what were some of those things  
38 which you were doing there on a day-to-day basis?

39

40 CARL [GERMAN]: The repairs which needed to be done on the engines. The  
41 longer we were out there, the more we had to deal with engine problems.  
42 And we had a lot to do with bearings, with bearings problems, which was  
43 was our main task. A lot on it gets damaged and we were very tense when  
44 the cooling system had broken down, and so on. That is, we had plenty to  
45 do.

46

47 A. Well, mainly we were responsible for repairing the

1 engine. The longer our journey took, the more engine  
2 problems we had, especially in the turning parts, they were  
3 destroyed quite often, and then also sometimes we had  
4 problems with the cooling systems, and that was my main  
5 job.

6

7 Q. Sir, I want to take you to 19 November 1941, that is  
8 the afternoon of the battle between Sydney and Kormoran.

9

10 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Now I would like to take you back to the 19th  
11 November 1941, to the afternoon, that was the day on which the battle  
12 between the Kormoran and the Sydney took place.

13

14 Q. On that afternoon, on 19 November, when the alarm rang,  
15 what was your battle station?

16

17 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: On that day, on the 19th November 1941, when the  
18 first alarm was sounded, what was your battle station?

19

20 CARL [GERMAN]: The above-water torpedo room, on the switch and control  
21 panel.

22

23 A. My battle station was the above-water torpedo room,  
24 and there I was at the --

25

26 THE INTERPRETER: How do you call it? It's like a panel  
27 where you have buttons to push. What's it called?

28

29 THE PRESIDENT: The control panel?

30

31 THE INTERPRETER: The control panel, that's it.

32

33 LEUT TYSON: Q. Sir, I just want to show you a document.  
34 This is a diagram in Barbara Winter's book which is a  
35 diagrammatic representation of Kormoran. Can you please  
36 indicate whereabouts you were, whereabouts your battle  
37 station was?

38

39 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: This is from a book by Barbara Winter, a diagram of  
40 the Kormoran...

41

42 CARL [GERMAN]: Yes, that was in the foreship. Well, you can see here in  
43 the above-water torpedo room. Here, yes, in the foreship.

44

45 A. It was in the foreship. It was the above-water  
46 torpedo room.

47

1 Q. Can I ask you, sir, to mark with a pen where you were.

2

3 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Could you perhaps mark it with a pen,  
4 approximately?

5

6 Q. Thank you.

7

8 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Thank you very much.

9

10 CARL [GERMAN]: I have seen everything, I mean the whole battle, as if  
11 looking from a window.

12

13 A. I've seen the whole battle. It was like seeing it  
14 from a window.

15

16

17 THE PRESIDENT: I will mark that sheet exhibit 15.

18

19 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: I will mark that as exhibit number 15.

20

21

22 EXHIBIT #15 DIAGRAM TAKEN FROM BARBARA WINTER'S BOOK, BEING  
23 DIAGRAMMATIC REPRESENTATION OF KORMORAN, MARKED BY  
24 MR HEINRICH CARL

25

26 LEUT TYSON: Q. Sir, you have just suggested that you  
27 saw the battle. Was there a scuttle or a porthole, or how  
28 was it that you were able to see the battle from that room?

29

30 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: You have just said that you were able to see the  
31 whole battle. Was there a porthole or a scuttle through which you were  
32 able to watch that?

33

34 CARL [GERMAN]: No, you have to imagine that this above-water torpedo room  
35 was different from the others. The flap went sideways up and along the  
36 ship's side, and the torpedo tubes were then swung out like that, and  
37 then there was a large window, one could see out from there.  
38 [incomprehensible].

39

40 A. No, it was not like that. You have to imagine the  
41 torpedoes were hidden behind these flaps, and when the flaps  
42 opened it was more or less like a window. When the flaps  
43 opened, the torpedoes had to be swung out, to point at the  
44 enemy, and when these flaps were open, it was like a  
45 window, you could see everything.

46

47 Q. In this torpedo room, can you be precise about what

1           you did? Were you involved in loading the torpedo or  
2           arming the torpedo? What did you actually do in that room?

3

4           INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: There, in the torpedo room, what was your exact  
5           task? Were you also responsible for re-loading the torpedoes?

6

7           CARL [GERMAN]: No, no, no, no. I had nothing to do with the torpedo  
8           weapon. My battle station was only the switch and control panel.

9

10          A. No, I didn't have anything to do with the torpedo  
11          itself. My battle station was only this control panel.

12

13          Q. Before the firing began, did you ever see Sydney  
14          approaching?

15

16          INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Before the gun battle had began, could you see the  
17          Sydney approaching?

18

19          CARL [GERMAN]: No, not that. I mean not that any more. I was in the  
20          washing room when the alarm started and then I had to run. When the alarm  
21          started I went to the [battle] station, but when I came there the flaps  
22          were still closed at that time. I mean we could already hear from the  
23          loudspeaker how, when, where, [incomprehensible]. After that the flaps  
24          went up, and only then I was able to see. Not before.

25

26          A. No, because when the alarm rang, I was actually in the  
27          washing room and then of course when the alarm rang, we all  
28          went to our battle stations, but then when I came up these  
29          flaps were still closed so I couldn't see anything. Every  
30          now and then we heard what was going on through the  
31          loudspeakers, but I didn't see anything to this point.

32

33          Q. Can you tell us, in the period from when you arrived  
34          at your battle station and before the firing started, what  
35          work was going on in the torpedo room?

36

37          INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Could you explain to us what work was being carried  
38          out in the torpedo room before the battle had actually began, that is  
39          between the time when you arrived at you battle station and before the  
40          battle had began?

41

42          CARL [GERMAN]: The crew was getting the torpedoes ready for a standby and  
43          preparing them for an attack.

44

45          A. Well, the crew was there preparing the torpedoes and  
46          making them ready for the attack.

47

1 Q. So the torpedoes were loaded and armed?

2

3 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: So the torpedoes were being loaded and armed?

4

5 CARL [GERMAN]: They were already in the tube. I mean, they were always in  
6 the tube.

7

8 A. They were already in the tube. They always were in  
9 the tube.

10

11 Q. But did you have to arm them or trigger them in some  
12 way?

13

14 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Did you have to ... those ...

15

16

17 THE INTERPRETER: That's what I said - well, anyway.

18

19

20 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Did you have to activate them or arm them? Before?  
21 Or what was being done there?

22

23 CARL [GERMAN]: It was a double tube. There were two torpedoes inside it,  
24 and the crew made them then ready for firing and they activated them.  
25 Although, what they did in there, that I do not know. That was the thing  
26 which the torpedo crew did.

27

28

29 THE INTERPRETER: I don't know exactly what they did. Of  
30 course there we had two tubes. They were both filled with  
31 one torpedo each. Of course the crew had to do something,  
32 like trigger them.

33

34 THE INTERPRETER: Is that the right word?

35

36 LEUT TYSON: Yes.

37

38 THE INTERPRETER: So they are ready to be shot, but I myself  
39 have no detailed knowledge about this because I was not  
40 part of the proper torpedo crew.

41

42 LEUT TYSON: Q. You may also then not be able to answer  
43 this question: as I understand it, with the torpedoes, if  
44 they were going to be fired at short range, there was a way  
45 that you could set the speed so it would move quickly on a  
46 short range. Do you know anything about that issue?

47

1 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Perhaps you may not be able to answer my next  
2 question at all, but as far as we know, there was a setting with these  
3 torpedoes that particularly at short range allowed to alter the speed of  
4 the torpedoes. Do you know anything about this?

5

6 CARL [GERMAN]: I am a layman on this.

7

8 A. No, I have no idea. I'm a layman.

9

10 Q. During the encounter between Kormoran and Sydney, were  
11 any torpedoes fired from the over-water starboard torpedo  
12 tubes?

13

14 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Well then, during the battle between the Kormoran  
15 and the Sydney were there any torpedoes fired from the above-water  
16 torpedo?

17

18 CARL [GERMAN]: Yes, two of them. One of them went in front and shot past  
19 the Sydney, and the other hit the Sydney in the foreship. I have seen  
20 that. That could be seen very well indeed.

21

22 A. Yes, two. Yes, two torpedoes were shot. One did not  
23 hit Sydney. In fact, it passed in front of her. The  
24 second one hit Sydney in the foreship.

25

26 Q. Do you know whether the torpedoes were fired before the  
27 guns started to fire or the torpedoes were fired after the  
28 guns were fired?

29

30 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Can you recall whether the torpedoes were fired  
31 before the artillery had started to fire, or only after that, that is  
32 afterwards, after the artillery had fired?

33

34 CARL [GERMAN]: The artillery started to fire first. Until the flaps were  
35 opened up, and so on, and until it swung out it took some time. There was  
36 a short delay there.

37

38 A. No, the artillery started to fire, because it also  
39 took some time until the flaps opened and then the torpedoes  
40 fired afterwards.

41

42 Q. How long did it take for the flaps to open?

43

44 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: How long did it take until the flaps were opened?

45

46 CARL [GERMAN]: Well, that went easily. There were weights on the other  
47 side, these had to be pulled, and then they went up. Then they were swung

1 out.

2

3 A. No, that was quick. It was very simple to do, because  
4 they had a weight on the other side, so it was very easy to  
5 swing them open, and then to swing out the torpedo tubes,  
6 it was quite quick.

7

8 THE PRESIDENT: Q. Did the flaps fold up to a  
9 horizontal?

10

11 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Did the flaps go up and did they then stay in a  
12 horizontal position?

13

14 CARL [GERMAN]: Yes.

15

16 A. Yes.

17

18 LEUT TYSON: Q. The order to fire the torpedoes, did that  
19 come from Greter by telephone into the torpedo room, or how  
20 did that order come about?

21

22 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: The order to fire the torpedoes, was it given by  
23 Greter? By telephone, or how did the order come through?

24

25 CARL [GERMAN]: That came from the bridge above. I do not know about that,  
26 that was something the torpedo crew was doing.

27

28

29

30 A. Well, it came from the bridge, but who gave the order,  
31 I don't know, because that was part of the torpedo crew's  
32 business.

33

34 THE PRESIDENT: Q. Was your function just to be there in  
35 case there were fires or damage?

36

37 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Was then your task only just ... Was it just to be  
38 there and watch, or was it to intervene in case of a fire or when there  
39 was any damage?

40

41 CARL [GERMAN]: Yes, damage, breakdowns, in case of the switchgear  
42 failure, and so on. That was my task.

43

44 A. Yeah, that was exactly more or less my duty - if there  
45 was a fuse breaking, if there was damage done somewhere,  
46 that was what I had to do.

47

1 LEUT TYSON: Q. Do you know whether a torpedo was fired  
2 from the under-water torpedo tubes on the starboard side of  
3 Kormoran?

4

5 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Do you know whether an under-water torpedo was also  
6 fired from the Kormoran on the starboard side?

7

8 CARL [GERMAN]: No, no. We had a fixed one built-in, and that one was not  
9 deployed. Only two torpedoes were fired.

10

11 A. No, there was no underwater torpedo fired. We had one  
12 and it was fixed in the hull of the Kormoran, but all in  
13 all there were only two torpedoes fired.

14

15 Q. At any stage did Kormoran heave to, did she remain  
16 moving during the whole stage after the alarm rang?

17

18 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Did the Kormoran...

19

20

21 THE INTERPRETER: Sorry, Kormoran or Sydney? I was  
22 confused.

23

24 LEUT TYSON: Kormoran.

25

26 THE INTERPRETER: Did Kormoran heave to. Okay.

27

28 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: During the battle did the Kormoran at any time  
29 heave to or did she continue moving? What happened?

30

31 CARL [GERMAN]: We continued to move on a parallel course with the Sydney,  
32 at a distance of 900 metres. That is where the battle took place. The  
33 Sydney had naturally slowed down by then, since after all she had  
34 suffered great damage. And she had tried to draw nearer on the other  
35 side, and her damage was great, and she had tried to get the torpedoes  
36 off on the port side. They shot these [torpedoes] which missed [us] at  
37 the back.

38

39

40 THE WITNESS: Well, the encounter was more or less both  
41 ships went on parallel courses, and a distance of about  
42 900 metres. Then, as Sydney got hit, she slowed down  
43 because apparently she had quite a big damage already and  
44 then she tried to veer away to the other side and tried to  
45 shoot her torpedoes at us, which it did in the end, but they  
46 missed their target.

47

1 LEUT TYSON: Q. I'm asking about Kormoran's speed.

2 I understand Kormoran at one stage, one of the engines had  
3 a problem, the number 4 engine, and her speed was reduced  
4 from about 17 or 18 knots to 14 knots. Do you know  
5 anything about that?

6

7 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Moreover, what I would also like to mention is the  
8 speed of the Kormoran. As far as is known to us, the engines of the  
9 Kormoran had suffered a problem. I believe that it was the engine number  
10 4 which had suffered the problem and that the speed had dropped from  
11 approximately 17 knots down to 14 knots. Is this correct?

12

13 CARL [GERMAN]: Yes. OK.

14

15 A. Yeah, that's right, yeah.

16

17 Q. Can you please tell us about that, what happened?

18

19 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Could you explain to us why this happened, what did  
20 happen, why was that so?

21

22 CARL [GERMAN]: As I mentioned before, we had suffered many instances of  
23 damage to the bearing casings. There were new constructions. That was the  
24 ground pressure from the diesel [engine]. The white metals in the bearing  
25 casings had broken down. I exchanged more than 200 bearing casings,  
26 emptied them and re-fitted them again. [incomprehensible]. There was also  
27 a damage to the bearing which I repaired on the run, and the casing  
28 around it I then ... and then the diesel [engine] could be deployed once  
29 again.

30

31

32 THE INTERPRETER: You have to help me with this one  
33 because we have some new words to me which I don't know.

34

35

36 THE INTERPRETER: Well, the problem is that, as I talked  
37 before, there were many damages at the machines and we had  
38 many damages in the --

39

40 THE INTERPRETER: This is now one I need to know. It's a  
41 "lager", it's like the most inner part of moving if you  
42 have a wheel. You know you have little --

43

44 LEUT TYSON: Bearings.

45

46 THE INTERPRETER: Bearings? Little metal balls in there.

47

1 LEUT TYSON: Bearings.

2

3 THE INTERPRETER: We have many problems with the bearings.

4 Also, like the shells of these bearings were broken all the

5 time, so at this special moment I had to fix one of the

6 bearings because before this the diesel could not flow

7 somewhere through and after this it worked again.

8

9 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Was this also the damage which occurred on that  
10 particular day?

11

12 CARL [GERMAN]: Yes, it was before the engine had suffered the damage to

13 the bearing casings. And of course the speed went down so they brought

14 the piston to a standstill, took the ... bearings out, then the casing

15 around it, and then it could go at full speed once again. That was during

16 the battle.

17

18 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Was that during the battle or shortly prior to the  
19 battle?

20

21 CARL [GERMAN]: That was just shortly before that, yes.

22

23 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Well, would you say 10 minutes, half an hour before  
24 that?

25

26 CARL [GERMAN]: Yes.

27

28

29 THE INTERPRETER: I just asked him again, like, if this  
30 was during the battle.

31

32 THE WITNESS: No, it was not during the battle. It was,  
33 like, 10 to 20 minutes before that. The moment he fixed  
34 the machine they used - the cylinder had broken, got stuck,  
35 and then they put around it - you know these things like a  
36 metal string and you can tie it, tighten it on one side so  
37 it gets closer, and that's how they fixed it.

38

39 LEUT TYSON: Q. After that was fixed, did Kormoran go  
40 back to her top speed?

41

42 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Could the Kormoran go back to full speed after  
43 that?

44

45 CARL [GERMAN]: No, no. Well, that was prevented then.

46

47 A. No, not full speed. Not full speed, it was a reduced

1 speed.

2

3 Q. At any stage after that problem was fixed, did  
4 Kormoran continue at the same pace or did she slow down or  
5 stop at any point?

6

7 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: And after it had been repaired, did the Kormoran  
8 continue to travel at the same speed or was it at a reduced speed, or did  
9 she then stop or slow down at any time again?

10

11 CARL [GERMAN]: As far as I know, she continued to travel at 14 knots.

12

13 A. As far as I know, she continued with 14 knots.

14

15 THE PRESIDENT: Q. Herr Carl, how long passed between  
16 you going to the battle station and the flaps being lifted  
17 from in front of the torpedoes?

18

19 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Mr. Carl, how much time had passed between the  
20 moment when you had reached your battle station and the moment when the  
21 flaps had been lifted?

22

23 CARL [GERMAN]: That was quite some time, I would say it was half past  
24 four (16:30) when the battle opened, then it was half past five (17:30)  
25 or something like that, although I do not recall the exact time any  
26 longer. Anyway, we did not look at our watches then.

27

28 A. Well, that was quite a long time, I think. It must  
29 have been half past 4, and then it must have been one hour  
30 later or something, half past 5, I think, until the battle  
31 opened, yeah - the firing opened, sorry.

32

33

34

35 Q. When the flaps were lifted, what could you see?

36

37 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: When the flaps were lifted what could you see?

38

39 CARL [GERMAN]: I saw everything. I saw the Sydney quite clearly. ... we  
40 were standing crossways ... Then I looked out. I clearly saw that. The  
41 torpedo had hit her at the front. The artillery has the top of this  
42 turret ..., the deck was already hanging. The flag was setting the  
43 "Vierling" under fire. Then it was hit upon hit. Then the Sydney was  
44 firing some from the back turrets, but those [shots] went over to the  
45 other side. She took a few hits, to the bridge and to the engine room.  
46 Then there was a bit of a delay, and the Sydney then fell behind and then  
47 she tried to get through at the back. Then she fired four torpedoes. Then

1 the battle continued for some time and then she was slowly burning on the  
2 horizon and then she disappeared.

3

4 A. I saw Sydney, I saw everything. I was here on this  
5 side. I was here more or less amidships and I could see  
6 everything. I also could see how the first - yeah, how  
7 Sydney was hit, how the lid of this turret - I think that's  
8 A and B, turret B was lifted and how she got hit by the  
9 torpedo and then after that she slowed down and like this.

10 9

11 THE INTERPRETER: Well, you have seen the movement before.  
12 Shall I make this again? More or less.

13

14 THE INTERPRETER: Until she was in this position, that's where  
15 she fired the torpedoes, her four torpedoes, which missed the  
16 Kormoran, but then our firing continued and this went on  
17 until she disappeared behind the horizon burning.

18

19 LEUT TYSON: Q. You said the B turret was hit. Can  
20 you describe Sydney's position in the water? Was she low  
21 in the water or was she maintaining her position in the  
22 water?

23

24 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: You have just mentioned that you had seen the hit  
25 when the gun turret of the Sydney - this one here - was hit. Can you  
26 recall the Sydney's position in the water at that point in time? Was she  
27 lying low in the water or was she...?

28

29 CARL [GERMAN]: After she had been hit by the torpedo she was down a  
30 little bit at the front, and she started to burn, and so on. She lost her  
31 speed.

32

33 A. No, she went down a little bit because she had been  
34 hit by the torpedo before, and after that anyway there  
35 was - and it was quite a mess on board,  
36 actually.

37

38 THE PRESIDENT: Q. But when the camouflage panels were  
39 first lifted, the torpedoes had not been fired. What could  
40 you see of the Sydney at that time?

41

42 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Yet when the camouflage flaps of the torpedoes were  
43 lifted, the torpedoes had not been fired before that, what were you able  
44 to see of the Sydney at that point in time? That is, before she was hit?

45

46 CARL [GERMAN]: I have seen her [the Sydney] all right. We were scared out  
47 of our wits. Such a battle ship in front of us, 900 metres away! Well, I

1 guess that we had more luck than brains. One hit into our mine storage  
2 hold and we all would have been blown into the air.

3

4 A. Well, I just saw Sydney, how she was. In fact, we  
5 were very, very scared because the flaps opened and then we  
6 saw this real battle ship in front of us, so we were  
7 really, really scared and one hit of Sydney in our aft, in  
8 the stern, where transported all the mines, and we would  
9 all have been exploded and we would have been dead, so we  
10 were really, really very scared.

11

12 LEUT TYSON: Q. Did you see Sydney's main gun turrets  
13 pointed at Kormoran?

14

15 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Could you see whether the Sydney's gun turrets were  
16 trained at the Kormoran?

17

18 CARL [GERMAN]: Well, they were pointing at us, yes, they were. And  
19 because of those hits, when the top turret deck was blown off, they were  
20 not able to shoot any longer, only those at the aft turrets were still  
21 shooting at us.

22

23 A. Well, they were pointing at us, but then later, due to  
24 the hits - well this turret B, that's where the lids came  
25 off, then they were not able to point at us anymore or the  
26 two - four turrets, whereas both afts, they kept on  
27 shooting at us.

28

29 THE PRESIDENT: Q. When you first saw Sydney, did I  
30 understand you to say she was about 900 metres away?

31

32 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: And when you saw the Sydney for the very first  
33 time, have I understood it correctly: did you say that she was then at a  
34 distance of 900 metres?

35

36 CARL [GERMAN]: I was below the deck and then I heard this: "A battle ship  
37 is approaching, it is coming closer and closer", and then I went up to  
38 the camouflage and the flap went up and then I saw her.

39

40

41 A. I heard it when I was down under the ship and then  
42 when I came up, and then we were really, really scared and  
43 when the flaps opened, or the panels, then I saw her there.

44

45 Q. Before the torpedoes were fired, did you see any damage  
46 on the Sydney caused by Kormoran's guns?

47

1 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Could you see whether there was any kind of damage  
2 to the Sydney before the torpedoes had been fired, that means any damage  
3 which would have been caused by the guns of the Kororan?  
4

5 CARL [GERMAN]: No, the artillery was shooting straight away then, before  
6 the torpedoes had been fired. Until the torpedoes are actually fired you  
7 need a little time. That's how it is. When you have guns firing, that  
8 goes much quicker. I have seen the bridge, I have seen that there were  
9 also hits there.  
10

11 A. No, of course the artillery shot much before there  
12 were damages caused by the guns of Kormoran. You see, a  
13 torpedo needs some time to reach the other ship, whereas  
14 the guns fire immediately and hit the other ship  
15 immediately, and I could see how the bridge of Sydney was  
16 hit.  
17

18 LEUT TYSON: Q. You have described the damage to the  
19 B turret and you've described Sydney as being low in the  
20 water and you've described damage to the bridge. Did you  
21 see any other damage to Sydney's superstructure or her  
22 masts or aials?  
23

24 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: You have already explained to us here that you were  
25 able to see the damage to the Sydney caused by the hits, in particular  
26 the damage to both of the gun turrets, then the damage caused by the  
27 torpedo hit to the foreship and to the bridge. Were you able to observe  
28 any other damage to the Sydney, apart from this damage, caused by the gun  
29 fire, or ...?  
30

31 CARL [GERMAN]: Yes, damage, enormous damage, not an ordinary damage at  
32 all. Well, I have seen the flames coming out, and then the torpedo tubes  
33 were on fire and ... The anti-aircraft artillerz took the launching tube  
34 under fire and you could see the impacts and the "Vierlingssatz"(= four  
35 torpedoes?) could not no anything The aeroplane at the front was swung  
36 out and the engine was switched off. And then it was hit after hit in  
37 quick succession, and then one could not really follow it all.  
38

39 A. Well, I could see that it got hit, basically, because  
40 we fired as much as we could and one after the other as  
41 much as we could, and I could see, for example, that the  
42 four torpedoes on Sydney, they were aimed at - from the  
43 Kormoran very much and you could see every now and then  
44 flames coming up where Sydney was hit. The torpedoes  
45 couldn't do anything anymore because they were hit so hard,  
46 but then in the end, because there was so much firing,  
47 there was nothing - no details to be seen anymore, it was

1 all like firing.

2

3 Q. You talk about flames. Was there also smoke coming  
4 off Sydney?

5

6 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: You have just mentioned that the flames were coming  
7 out from everywhere, or that they were coming out at times. Did you also  
8 see the smoke from the Sydney rising?

9

10 CARL [GERMAN]: Yes, smoke and flames and all of that, grenade shells  
11 being fired. Although how many hits the Sydney took is something that the  
12 gunnery crew would know more about, I am unable to determine that. But it  
13 was more than plenty. You can well imagine what it looked like in there.

14

15 A. Well, fire and flames, I mean, it's all together, and  
16 there was shot so many shells at Sydney, something I don't  
17 know anything about it, you should ask the gunnery crew,  
18 they do know about it, but it must have been quite a lot of  
19 stuff fired to Sydney.

20

21 Q. When you saw the relative position of the ships  
22 changing, Sydney moving away, was Sydney drifting or do you  
23 think it was a deliberate manoeuvre that she made?

24

25 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: You have previously mentioned, or described, the  
26 manoeuvres or the relative position of the Sydney. Would you say that the  
27 Sydney's change of course might be put down to the fact that she was only  
28 drifting, or that it was an intentional manoeuvre on her part?

29

30 CARL [GERMAN]: I assume that it was intentional, that they wanted to make  
31 use of her starboard torpedo tubes. That's what I assume.

32

33 A. Well, what I think is that it was deliberate because  
34 I think they wanted to use their starboard torpedoes.

35

36 Q. Do you know, when the relative position of the two  
37 ships changed, whether Kormoran used her port over-water  
38 torpedo tubes at any stage to fire at Sydney?

39

40 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: When the position of the Sydney had thus changed,  
41 to you knowledge, had the Kormoran's portside torpedoes been fired at the  
42 Sydney?

43

44 CARL [GERMAN]: No, no, no.

45

46 A. No, no.

47

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Q. So as far as you know, Kormoran –

CARL [GERMAN]: In the meantime she was burning heavily, then there was no more firing at us and it was then that the artillery stopped firing. And then it was late afternoon. And then she became slower and slower, and she drifted further, and then we saw only flames.

A. No, she drifted away more and more and then as she stopped firing at us, also our artillery stopped firing and then she drifted away in flames and disappeared.

CARL [GERMAN]: Nothing was fired from the portside [of our ship].

A. There was nothing fired from the port side of our ship.

Q. How do you know that? I mean, did you actually do any work in the port torpedo room?

INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: How do you know that? Did you have anything to do or were you actually doing any work also in the portside torpedo room?

CARL [GERMAN]: It was a large space, it was an open hold from the starboard wall to the portside wall, you could walk straight through there. Those were not deployed, they had been put away. The artillery fired well.

A. It was one big room ranging from the starboard side to the port side, so I could have seen it. The torpedoes were not shot on the port side. Of course the gunnery, the guns, fired from the port side, they did, but not the torpedoes.

Q. You say, do you, that only two torpedoes were ever fired from Kormoran?

INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Well, does it mean that you are still saying that two torpedoes were fired.

CARL [GERMAN]: Correct.

A. Yes.

Q. You talked about Sydney firing torpedoes. Did you actually see those torpedoes?

1  
2 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: You have previously also mentioned that the Sydney  
3 fired torpedoes. Were you able to see how they were fired?

4  
5 CARL [GERMAN]: No, I heard that from someone only later when I was a  
6 prisoner of war, from someone who was from the bridge staff. That is to  
7 say, I have not seen it myself. If (the torpedoes were fired at the  
8 Kormoran) they went behind the back.

9  
10  
11

12 A. No, I haven't seen this myself I heard it later when  
13 I was a prisoner of war and I heard the others talking  
14 about it and they said that they passed behind the  
15 stern of Kormoran.

16

17 Q. Some accounts of the battle talk about damage to  
18 Kormoran's engine room. Did you see or do you know  
19 anything about that?

20

21 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: In some of the reports about the battle it has been  
22 stated that the Kormoran had received one hit or several hits to its  
23 engine room. Can you confirm this, or do you know anything about that?

24

25 CARL [GERMAN]: Well, when the battle was virtually over, the canons were  
26 silent, there is lots of thick smoke on top of all of that... I  
27 personally was trying to find out in the engine room, since I was  
28 assigned to fire fighting duties, whether there was anything which could  
29 be saved. When I saw the thick smoke, I quickly closed the door. Then I  
30 went to the stern where the main fire fighting post was to be found. I  
31 wanted to check it for myself, but there was no pressure, that is to say  
32 the main fire extinguishing line was ... it was destroyed by a hit. And  
33 more and more fires were breaking out. And so on, and so on.

34

35 A. Well, of course, one of my responsibilities was also  
36 to operate a fire extinguishing apparatus, and when the  
37 battle was over, when the guns had stopped firing,  
38 I quickly went to the stern and tried to see what I can do  
39 down there in the engine room, but then all the steam, all  
40 the smoke, came up to me so I just closed the door quickly  
41 and went to the stern of Kormoran in order to check the  
42 fire extinguishing apparatus and I had to find out that  
43 there was no pressure there, so there was also no way of  
44 using this fire extinguishing system we had on board.  
45 Due to this, the fire increased, in fact, more and more.

46

47 Q. Do you know what happened to Leut Stehr and

1 Leut von Gaza?

2

3 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Do you know what [happened] to Lieutenant Stehr and  
4 to Lieutenant von Gaza...?

5

6 CARL [GERMAN]: They stayed in the engine room. They were killed in  
7 action, in the engine room.

8

9 A. They stayed in the engine room and died.

10

11 Q. Can you describe this engine room fire? Did you see  
12 it? I mean, did you see damage? Can you tell us what you

13

14

15 I saw, what you know about the engine room fire?

16

17 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Could you tell us what exactly the fire in the  
18 engine room looked like? Could you say anything more specific about that?  
19 What it was like?

20

21 CARL [GERMAN]: No. No. No.

22

23 A. No.

24

25 Q. You didn't see that?

26

27 CARL [GERMAN]: There was thick smoke and fire coming out from everywhere.  
28 You could not see anything any more. The engines had gone out of control.  
29 The ship was then shaking badly.

30

31 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Gone out of control? What do you mean exactly with  
32 that, if I may ask you that once again?

33

34 CARL [GERMAN]: The [engine] revolutions went too high. They had gone way  
35 above normal, it was not working any longer. Everything was then shaking.

36

37 A. There was fire coming out everywhere, but I couldn't  
38 see. The ship was shaking because the revolutions of  
39 the engines were so high suddenly. There was steam and  
40 smoke everywhere, but I couldn't see any details.

41 9

42 Q. Were Kormoran's guns still firing at the time that the  
43 ship was shaking?

44

45 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Were the Kormoran's guns still firing at the time  
46 when the ship was shaking so badly?

47

1 CARL [GERMAN]: No, no. One can say that the battle was then practically  
2 at its end.

3

4 A. No, no, the fighting had ceased already more or less  
5 then, so it was more or less finished.

6

7 Q. So it was only after the firing stopped that this  
8 engine problem really affected Kormoran?

9

10 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Was it the case that the engine problems had  
11 actually emerged only after the battle was over?

12

13 CARL [GERMAN]: No, during the battle.

14

15 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Well, and this shaking, that was during the battle,  
16 wasn't it?

17

18 CARL [GERMAN]: Yes, yes. The hit was to the engine, that was during the  
19 battle.

20

21 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: No, but the damage to the engine?

22

23 CARL [GERMAN]: No, that was only later. That was later.

24

25 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Well, and after the battle was over, was there the  
26 shaking and the damage to the engine?

27

28 CARL [GERMAN]: Yes.

29

30 A. Yeah, that was later. The damage to the engine was  
31 after the battle and the shaking also.

32

33 Q. Herr Carl, can you explain why it was that  
34 Capt Detmers ordered Kormoran to be abandoned?

35

36 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Thank you, Mr. Carl. Would you still be able to  
37 recall why Captain Detmers gave the orders to leave the ship?

38

39 CARL [GERMAN]: Yes. First of all, the engine room was burning, that could  
40 not be extinguished. Yes, what was there to be done with our ship? The  
41 bridge was burning, that continued to spread further and further. What  
42 else was there to be done? And the fire was spreading everywhere.  
43 Therefore the word was out to abandon the ship.

44

45 A. Well, what else was there left to do? There was fire  
46 everywhere - well, not everywhere, but we were not capable  
47 of extinguishing this fire and also the bridge was burning,

1 so there was really not much to do and the fire was  
2 increasing and increasing.

3

4 Q. Do you remember when the order came to abandon ship?

5

6 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Do you still remember when the order to abandon the  
7 ship was given?

8

9 CARL [GERMAN]: When? At what time? It could have been then about 10, 11  
10 o'clock. I can only say that I was still having a look at the stern and  
11 then I saw our men were already in the water inside the lifeboats, and  
12 the sharks were already circling around ... and then I said to myself,  
13 you will now go and have a good drink and then you will be blown up with  
14 the whole thing. And the lifeboats were on fire anyway, and so on. And  
15 then I ... somebody called me... and then there was a rubber boat, and I  
16 was taken into that one. And then there were the lifeboats of the prize  
17 crew. Those were then placed onto the top deck, and those were by hand  
18 [incomprehensible] ... since there was no electric power any longer.  
19 Later on all of these were launched in water, and then the remainder of  
20 the crew, then those were inside there ...

21

22 A. Well, I would say it was sometime 10, 11 o'clock.  
23 Well, I was standing at the stern at this time, and I saw  
24 already some people down there in the water in the  
25 life rafts surrounded by sharks, and I thought to myself,  
26 well, I think I've got to have a strong drink now and go up  
27 to heaven together with the explosion, but then this guy  
28 down there in the life raft told me to come down, and then  
29 I went down also to one of the rubber lifeboats, that's how  
30 I was saved, and we also had the guys in the front of the  
31 ship, they were already working on taking out the rescue  
32 ships or the lifeboats we had (inaudible) before that were  
33 undertaken they did this by hand because we didn't have any  
34 electricity on board, any power on board, at this moment.  
35 Yeah.

36

37 Q. During this period when the ship was being abandoned,  
38 did you see Sydney at all?

39

40 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: When abandoning the ship, can you recall whether  
41 ... During the period when the ship was being abandoned, or at that time,  
42 could you still see the Sydney?

43

44 CARL [GERMAN]: Only the fire glare on the horizon. With our rubber boat  
45 we were trying to move in the direction of the fire glare, as the point  
46 of direction, but some time later we could not see anything any longer.

47

1 A. No, we just saw a glare on the horizon. When we were  
2 in our rubber boat, we even tried to go in the direction of

3

4

5 Sydney because we used it as a bearing, as a fixing, but  
6 then later we couldn't see anything anymore.

7

8 Q. Whose boat were you in? Whose lifeboat were you in?

9 Which person was in charge of that boat?

10

11 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Whose lifeboat were you in? Who was the person in  
12 charge there?

13

14 CARL [GERMAN]: Well, I was in a rubber boat. We were 26 men in there. And  
15 we were the first ones to be taken on board by the Aquitania, on Sunday  
16 morning. Then we landed in Sydney later on.

17

18 A. Well, I was together with 26 other people in a rubber  
19 boat, and we were the first ones to be rescued by Aquitania  
20 on next Sunday. We landed in Sydney then later.

21 9

22 Q. Was there an officer in charge of your boat or was a  
23 selbstsegler or –

24

25 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Was there an officer who was somehow in charge in  
26 the rubber boat, who was present in the rubber boat?

27

28 CARL [GERMAN]: No, no officer. We had no officer in the boat.

29

30 A. No, we didn't have any officer or warrant officer in  
31 our boat.

32

33 Q. Can I just ask you, as part of your job as a  
34 machinist, did you ever do any work on disguises of  
35 Kormoran as other merchant ships?

36

37 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: May I ask you yet another question: as part of your  
38 job as a machinist on the Kormoran, were you also responsible for the  
39 camouflage of the Kormoran, or were you also occupied with making the  
40 camouflage for the Kormoran?

41

42

43 CARL [GERMAN]: No, this was what the sailors did.

44

45 A. No, this was the job of the seamen, of the sailors.

46

47 Q. At any stage, did you see any men from Sydney in the

1 water, any survivors from Sydney?

2

3 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Did you ever see any survivors from the Sydney  
4 drifting in the water, or have you seen any?

5

6 CARL [GERMAN]: No. Well, what we think is that after the heavy hits  
7 suffered there would not have been too many lives left in there. In those  
8 days the battle ships did not have lifeboats as they do nowadays, and so  
9 on. And in the numbers, such as the people ... people jumping into the  
10 water, having no lifeboats, then all of them perishing. But that is all  
11 just speculations now. What it was really like, nobody knows any longer.

12

13 A. No, I haven't seen any of them. Also, I assume that  
14 after the damage on Sydney, there weren't many survivors,  
15 for a start, like, from the hits that she received, and  
16 there must have been a dramatic situation on board of  
17 Sydney. As far as I know, they didn't have as many  
18 lifeboats as nowadays, and I think it was the same dramatic  
19 situation as on board of Kormoran. People might have  
20 jumped into the water and didn't have a lifeboat there,  
21 I think, but, yeah, I haven't seen any survivors in the  
22 water at all.

23

24 Q. Just some other miscellaneous questions. Are you  
25 aware of Kormoran having smoke generators that could put  
26 out a smoke screen on her bridge somewhere?

27

28 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Still a few more different questions will follow  
29 now. Do you know whether the Kormoran had a smoke screen machine with  
30 which it was possible to make smoke from the bridge in order to...

31

32 CARL [GERMAN]: A smoke generator.

33

34 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: A smoke generator, exactly.

35

36 CARL [GERMAN]: Yes. That has become nothing but a hindrance for us.  
37 Shortly before the Gulf of Bengal, shortly before Madras. We wanted to  
38 place mines, and then it was said "ready for action" [incomprehensible]  
39 ... having hit the smoke generators, quite suddenly, apparently by  
40 mistake. Then the plan was foiled. Suddenly thick smoke appeared from  
41 behind and then the English battle ships ... then we had naturally  
42 realized that trouble was brewing and disappeared as fast as we could. We  
43 had those in there, but they were practically never deployed.

44

45 A. Yes. Yes, we had them on board but as well it was  
46 quite bad because we had - when we were in the Gulf of  
47 Bengalan --

1

2 Q. Bengal Gulf, yes.

3 A. Bengal Gulf, this smoke generator went off by accident  
4 and English or British auxiliary crews are near and we had  
5 to get out of this region very quickly because they saw all  
6 our smoke.

7

8 Q. In this encounter with the Sydney, between the period  
9 when Sydney was first sighted and the battle, do you know

10

11 whether the smoke generator was used to generate a smoke  
12 screen?

13

14 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Are you aware whether the smoke generator was used  
15 between the first sighting of the Sydney and until the Sydney ...

16

17 CARL [GERMAN]: No, it was not deployed during the battle. No, no.

18

19 A. No, it was not used as a - not during the battle or  
20 the encounter, no.

21

22 Q. Just a final set of questions. Do you remember the  
23 Kulmerland resupplying Kormoran about six weeks before the  
24 encounter with Sydney in mid-October 1941?

25

26 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: A few more final questions. Could you recall the  
27 Kormoran receiving supplies from the Kulmerland approximately six weeks  
28 prior to the encounter with the Sydney? That there was such a meeting  
29 with the Kulmerland?

30

31 CARL [GERMAN]: Well, I do not remember any longer when exactly that was.  
32 In any case we were always receiving our supplies from the Kulmerland,  
33 from the South Atlantic, most often... When exactly that was, that I do  
34 not know.

35

36 A. I don't know the exact date when that was, but of  
37 course, like, every now and then we received supplies from  
38 Kulmerland.

39

40 Q. Do you know whether at that time Kulmerland resupplied  
41 Kormoran for operations to last for a short time or many  
42 months into the future?

43

44 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Do you know whether the supplies, which you  
45 received at that last point in time from the Kulmerland, were provisions  
46 for a longer period or for a shorter period?

47

1 CARL [GERMAN]: I do not know that. Well, at that time we had spent  
2 already three quarters of a year at sea and it was about to end soon.  
3 There were not many supplies needed by then.

4

5 A. I don't know how much was taken on board as resupply,  
6 but at this point of time, we were already, like, at the  
7 end of our time, because we had already been on sea for  
8 three-quarters of the year, and it was all going to end  
9 soon, so I don't think there was much of a resupply.

10

11 LEUT TYSON: They were the questions on behalf of Counsel  
12 Assisting. I don't know whether Commissioner Cole has got  
13 further questions.

14

15 THE PRESIDENT: Yes, I do.

16

17 Q. Herr Carl, when the camouflage was lifted and you  
18 could see the Sydney, did you see any aeroplane on board  
19 Sydney?

20

21 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: That was my part of the questions, which I had put  
22 to you myself, Lieutenant Tyson. I do not know whether Mr. Cole has any  
23 more questions. Mr. Cole then said: "Yes, I do have one question, namely,  
24 Mr. Carl, when the camouflage flaps were lifted were you able to see then  
25 the aeroplane on board the Sydney?"

26

27 CARL [GERMAN]: Yes.

28

29 A. Yes, I could see the aeroplane.

30

31 Q. Was the aeroplane doing anything? Was it stationary?

32

33 CARL [GERMAN]: Yes, at first they had the engine running, and suddenly no  
34 more. That is before the battle. Then they had the engine turned off.

35

36 A. Well, before the battle, the engine was running, but  
37 then they had turned off the engine. I think you should  
38 repeat your question.

39

40 Q. But when the flap opened and you could see the  
41 aeroplane, was the propeller turning or not?

42

43 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: When this camouflage flap, [...] exactly at that  
44 moment when it was opened, [...] was the propeller of the aeroplane  
45 turning?

46

47 CARL [GERMAN]: No, it was not turning.

1

2 A. No, it was off.

3

4 Q. Could you see Sydney attempting to lower any lifeboat  
5 or cutter?

6

7 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Could you see whether there were any lifeboats on  
8 board of the Sydney being launched into the water?

9

10 CARL [GERMAN]: No, no. no.

11

12 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Were you not able to see it, or did this not  
13 happen?

14

15 CARL [GERMAN]: Boats into the water? No.

16

17 A. No, I couldn't see anything of that.

18

19 Q. How long do you think the battle took from the first  
20 firing of guns to the ceasing of guns?

21

22 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: What would you say, how long did the battle last in  
23 total, from the first shot until the last shot?

24

25 CARL [GERMAN]: I would have to look this up in the book, to see what is  
26 written in there. The exact time is in there. Well, it has escaped my  
27 memory.

28

29

30

31 A. I don't know exactly. I would have to look it up in  
32 the book our Commander has written about it to have the  
33 exact time. I don't know it.

34

35 Q. When the order was given to abandon ship, was that  
36 given over a loudspeaker system?

37

38 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Thank you very much. The order to abandon the ship,  
39 was it given over the loudspeaker?

40

41 CARL [GERMAN]: Yes.

42

43 A. Yes.

44

45 Q. What about when Capt Detmers gave the order to remove  
46 the camouflage - was that given over a loudspeaker system?

47

1 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: And the order from Captain Detmers to remove the  
2 camouflage, was that also given over the loudspeaker?

3

4 CARL [GERMAN]: Yes, everyone at each of the stations somehow understood  
5 that.

6

7 A. Well, everybody somehow understood this on each battle  
8 station.

9

10 Q. The Kormoran had previously sunk eight or nine,  
11 perhaps more, vessels. When she was going into battle  
12 against the earlier vessels, not the Sydney, was there some  
13 order given by the captain before the Kormoran opened fire?

14

15 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: The Kormoran had already sunk eight or nine ships  
16 before the battle with the Sydney. During the battles with these other  
17 ships ...

18

19

20 THE INTERPRETER: Sorry, the last bit of your question  
21 again? Make this very clear. I think that's the most  
22 important part. So what was the order?

23

24 THE PRESIDENT: Q. Previously, Kormoran had sunk a  
25 number of vessels, eight or nine vessels. Before Kormoran  
26 opened fire on each of those vessels, did the captain give  
27 some order?

28

29 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: During these other battles, did the Captain give  
30 any orders prior to the Kormoran opening fire against these other ships?

31

32 CARL [GERMAN]: Yes, those were then signalled by Morse Code and also by  
33 flag signalling and so on, and [warned] not to transmit by radio and such  
34 like. One ship shot back, otherwise normally they would not.

35

36 A. Well, there was morse signalling and flag signalling  
37 to signal the other ships to stop or to stop using their  
38 radio and only one ship ever shot back.

39

40 Q. But did the captain give any order over the  
41 loudspeaker system before firing on ships?

42

43 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: But was the captain giving any orders over the  
44 loudspeaker before the first gunshot, or before the firing commenced?  
45 During these other battles?

46

47 CARL [GERMAN]: No, there was just regular alarm, and so on. Then we would

1 follow the ship ... and then the flag signal and morse and so on and then  
2 if they did not want to ..and not to travel any further, and no  
3 'wireless', and then if they did not want to, then one gunshot was fired  
4 over the bow. When they stopped after that, then we had taken over the  
5 entire ship's company. Then the ships were sunk. That was the prize then,  
6 the matter of prize [right].  
7

8 A. No, no, it was just a normal procedure that was the  
9 alarm rang and then we followed the ship and told them not  
10 to use their wireless and to stop and to hold to and if  
11 they didn't do that they received one shot in front of the  
12 bow and most of them followed our instructions and then we  
13 took over the crew on board of the ship and sank the ship.  
14 That was usually the procedure.  
15

16 Q. So the only order given over a loudspeaker system was  
17 to go to action stations and the other orders were given by  
18 the captain to particular officers to do various things; is  
19 that right?  
20

21 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Does it mean that the only orders given over the  
22 loudspeaker were those to go to the battle station? Unlike the individual  
23 orders to open fire and so on that were ... directly to the responsible  
24 officers?  
25

26 CARL [GERMAN]: Yes, to the officers and so on. They got it directly, or  
27 through the headphones... I do not know about that, after all I was not a  
28 gunner myself.  
29

30 A. Yeah, it was the other - these orders were given to  
31 the officers directly, they were wearing headphones, or to  
32 the people on the guns. But I was not responsible for  
33  
34 this, so I don't really know what the orders were they  
35 received.  
36

37 Q. When Capt Detmers gave the order to abandon ship, did  
38 he speak to the crew at all?  
39

40 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: When Captain Detmers gave orders to abandon the  
41 ship, did he address the crew at that time?  
42

43 CARL [GERMAN]: I do not know that, I was no longer on board at that time,  
44 [I] was already below the thing by then, we were on the deck by then ...  
45 those were leading from the board to the water. Well, I do not know about  
46 that, I was no longer an eyewitness there.  
47

1 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Well, I believe that was not quite the question,  
2 but ...

3

4

5 THE INTERPRETER: Do you want his translation, because  
6 I think that was not the answer to the question you asked.

7

8 THE PRESIDENT: All right.

9

10 THE INTERPRETER: Anyway, he said, "I don't know this  
11 because I was already in the lifeboat and Capt Detmers was  
12 there alone with some other guys and I didn't hear this."  
13 But I think your question referred to something else.

14

15 THE PRESIDENT: Q. Capt Detmers did not speak generally  
16 to the crew about what they should do, apart from  
17 abandoning ship; is that right?

18

19 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Well then, Captain Detmers did not make a general  
20 speech to the crew, or did he? Addressing the crew, what was to be done  
21 then?

22

23 CARL [GERMAN]: No, no, no. I do not know that, I was already gone by  
24 then. The Commander and the rest of the crew, they were in the last boat,  
25 they launched the boat in water and they were not seen ever again...

26

27 A. No, I was - not as far as I know, but I was in the one  
28 of the first boats, and the rest of the crew were there  
29 still on the forecastle trying to lower the lifeboats, but  
30 I have never seen them again since then, so I don't know  
31 what happened after that.

32

33 Q. And in your boat, which I think you said had  
34 26 people, did anyone have any guns with them?

35

36 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: In the lifeboat in which you were, in the rubber  
37 boat, there were 26 persons, as you said before. Was there anyone who was  
38 carrying a firearm?

39

40 CARL [GERMAN]: No, the only thing which we had was a signalling gun and  
41 we dropped it into the sea during the night when the boat capsized. And  
42 the following morning when the Aquitania was passing by, we could not  
43 make ourselves noticed, since we had no signalling gun. We had no other  
44 weapons whatsoever ....

45

46 A. No, all we had was a signalling gun and we even lost  
47 this one when our boat capsized in the night, and so the

1 next morning when we saw Aquitania passing by, we didn't  
2 even have the chance to shoot a signal, but then luckily  
3 Aquitania found us without the signal.

4

5 CARL [GERMAN]: Our boat capsized during the night. We were all in the  
6 water, until all of us were inside [the boat] once again. We lost no one.  
7 I did not see [anything else], only the sea all the time, we had fastened  
8 ourselves onto our backs and so we managed to survive the waves. And in  
9 the early hours of the morning we sighted the Aquitania. They could not  
10 see us, as we were to learn only later on. The bridge had discovered us  
11 only by accident. One steward was doing his exercises and while he looked  
12 out he could see something floating on the water. He notified then the  
13 bridge, then they stopped and so they had taken us on board.

14

15 A. I must add that  
16 during the night our boat capsized --

17

18 LEUT TYSON: Sorry, I think the tape has just come to an  
19 end. It has 30 seconds to go. So we might just pause for  
20 one moment.

21

22 SHORT ADJOURNMENT

23

24 LEUT TYSON: Thank you. We've just changed the tape.  
25 Herr Thomas, did you need to go back, or did you know where  
26 we were?

27

28 THE INTERPRETER: No, that's fine. I know where we were.  
29 I'll just continue with what Mr Carl told me before.

30

31

32

33 THE INTERPRETER: Well, our boat capsized at night, and that's  
34 when we lost the signalling gun because there was a very  
35 high swell. Fortunately, we didn't lose any persons during  
36 this capsizing, but then we stayed very close together to  
37 fight against the huge waves.

38

39 The next day it was very lucky. The Aquitania didn't  
40 even see us, it passed by, and then we didn't have a  
41 signalling gun, and it was pure coincidence that we were  
42 discovered because one of the stewards opened a scuttle and  
43 then he just saw something there in the distance, then he  
44 told the bridge, he reported it to the bridge, and then the  
45 Aquitania stopped and rescued us.

46

47 THE PRESIDENT: Thank you. They are the only questions

1 that I had.

2

3 LEUT TYSON: Q. Just one final question: when you were  
4 picked up by the Aquitania, the men of Kormoran who were  
5 picked up, did you talk about how you were going to respond  
6 to interrogations, what you may or may not say?

7

8 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: These have been my questions for now. That was from  
9 Mr. Cole. Now Mr. Tyson has one very last question. When you were picked  
10 up by the Aquitania, when you were saved, were there any discussions  
11 amongst yourselves on how you were to behave in case of an interrogation,  
12 or anything like that?

13

14 CARL [GERMAN]: No, non, no. Everybody was saying what he had experienced  
15 himself. What was there to be hidden? There was no reason for that.

16

17 A. No, no, no, there was no reason to hide anything.  
18 Everybody just told what he was able to tell. There was no  
19 reason for hiding anything.

20

21 LEUT TYSON: No further questions.

22

23 THE PRESIDENT: Herr Carl, thank you very much indeed for  
24 your help. Your evidence has been of great assistance to  
25 the inquiry and we are very grateful to you for making  
26 yourself available to us to help us solve and right the  
27 history of what happened in this battle.

28

29 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Mr. Carl, I would like to thank you sincerely for  
30 having made yourself available to us today. I believe that your evidence  
31 which you had given today will be very helpful to us enabling us to  
32 clarify at last the circumstances which had lead to the loss of the  
33 Sydney. I am truly very, very grateful to you for that.

34

35 CARL [GERMAN]: Do you want to conduct more interviews with our crew?

36

37

38 THE WITNESS: Do you want to have more interviews from our  
39 crew?

40

41 THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

42

43 INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Yes, yes, yes. In any case. Of course.

44

45

46 LEUT TYSON: We have several planned. Thank you, and we  
47 will now terminate the interview.

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47

INTERPRETER [GERMAN]: Actually we would like to interview as many as possible. Thank you very much and with this we shall now end our interview.

THE INQUIRY ADJOURNED ACCORDINGLY

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