SECRET
CONFIDENTIAL

NAVAL INTELLIGENCE DIVISION

AUSTRALIAN ARCHIVES, VICTORIA
ACCESS DECISION:  DATE
OPEN  
OPEN WITH EXCEPT.  MAR/82
CLOSED
REMARKS:

Subject:
JAP STORY OF HOW SHIP WAS SUNK
For the first time details were received in Melbourne, Australia, of how the Japanese prison ship Nusantara, from Rabaul, was sunk by an Allied submarine on July 1, 1942, off the Philippines.

The report came from the Japanese, and was obtained only after strenuous efforts by Maj. R. W. Williams of the Australian government and Rear Adm. Scates, the commander of POW's.

The ship carried 1,053 POW's and civilian internees from Rabaul—mostly Australian and New Zealand soldiers—and the report arrived in Melbourne by 5 p.m., after a few minutes of being hit.

The report said nothing about the prisoners, who, it is hoped, were not driven down in the hold. The ship, a 1,000-ton merchantman, was sunk in a few minutes by a terrifying hit.
Dear Sir,

re SINKING MONTEVIDEO MARU.

With reference to your communication of 20th October, 1954 which makes enquiry regarding the sinking of the Montevideo Maru, following is information you desire.

The MONTEVIDEO MARU, Japanese Transport, (7,226 tons) was torpedoed and sunk by a U.S. Submarine, U.S.S. STURGEON, 18°37' N., 119°29'E., at 3 a.m. on July 1st, 1942, 60 miles N.W. of Cape Bojidor, Luzon Island, in the Philippines.

The ship carried 1,053 P.O.W.s and civilian internees from Rabaul - mostly Australians. Of the 132 Japanese crew and 88 guards only 17 sailors and three guards reached shore.

Yours faithfully,

(T. J. Hawkins)
Secretary.

Mr. G. J. Angell,
The Secretary,
R.S.S.I.L.A.,
Anzac House,
Wickham Terrace,
BRISBANE. Q'LD.
The Secretary,
Historical Naval Research Section,
NAVY OFFICE
MELBOURNE

Dear Sir,

re: Sinking, Montevideo Maru

We have been asked by one of our Sub-branches (P.M.G. Sub-Branch), to seek information in regard to the abovementioned ship, which I understand was sunk by the American Navy in July 1942 whilst carrying P.O.W and Civilian Internees from Rabaul to Japan.

The Post Office, Brisbane, has erected a plaque to the memory of those employees of the P.M.G. Department who were captured in Rabaul and lost their lives when this ship was sunk.

It would be very much appreciated if you could kindly advise the date of the sinking of this ship, so that I may in turn advise the P.M.G. Sub-branch, R.S.S.A.I.L.A.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours faithfully,

STATE SECRETARY.
(G. J. ANGELL)

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