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May 23, 1975

U.S.S. MONTEREY REUNION, SATURDAY, MAY 24, 1975

(ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS)

This is really a very special evening for me -- to be here with so many of my ~~fellow~~ shipmates from the U.S.S. MONTEREY -- the ship that won the war single-handed. Historians may not agree with that but my motto is -- if you're going to remember -- remember big!

I can't tell you how good it makes me feel to see so many familiar and warmly remembered faces here tonight. This is certainly the most well-attended reunion we have had to date and I hope this will set a pattern we can follow for many years.

Box X

A night like this, exchanging stories and looking at old snapshots, brings back so many memories. Like playing basketball on the ship's elevator. Remember basketball on the elevator? Sometimes you and came to the basket --/sometimes the basket came to you.

I also remember the many months we spent in the South Pacific -- the Marshall Islands, the Gilbert Islands, the Carolines, the Marianas Turkey Shoot -- and finally December 17th and 18th, 1944, and that typhoon to end all typhoons!

I can still remember the planes breaking loose from their moorings, and then careening against each other and the sides of the ship. And finally, catching fire from their own sparks so that in time, the entire MONTEREY ^{hangar deck} was ablaze from bow to stern.

I have since learned that a spectator on the bridge of another ship in the task force, looked at us ^{dead in the water} ~~going up in flames~~ and said,

"Well --- check off the MONTEREY." Needless to say, Captain Ingersoll wasn't about to check off his ship. His ^{fine leadership} ~~superb seamanship~~ and his complete mastery of the situation enabled us to contain the fire, and survive a storm that Hanson Baldwin, the former military editor

of the New York Times described as the worst in 500 years of naval history. I think we all owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to Vice Admiral Ingersoll here with us tonight.

I wish that circumstances were such that I could stay for dinner tonight but perhaps it's for the best that I can't. One of our shipmates, Bob Mallek, wrote in from California to say that he couldn't come but he added this postscript. He said, "Should Jerry make it, don't let him direct the Hotel's Serving Personnel. His experience as the R3 Division Officer in charge of mess cooks, was not that distinguished!"

All I can add to that is -- it still isn't. Why do you think I have to make my own breakfast?

This has been a great evening for me and I hope we will all be able to get together and trade old sea stories again in the future.

Thank you very much.

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