

Sept. 5, '07

# Statement of Jack Paulton WWII Navy

I enlisted in the spring of 1944, admittedly choosing the navy because there were thousands of army air force radio school students walking the streets of Sioux Falls in their army's drab colored uniforms. This made the high school girls think the navy blues were much cuter on sailors home on leave. Most of my friends thus joined the navy or marines.

I became a Gunner's Mate 3C on a destroyer escort, a 300' ship designed to protect convoys from enemy submarines. In August 1945 we were taking a convoy from Okinawa back to the Philippines. The second night, as we zig zagged in front of the convoy, we heard a radio broadcast report that a new huge bomb had been dropped on a Jap city and perhaps the Japs would capitulate, ending the war. The next night we hit the sack early to catch up on lost sleep, but the gong sounded general quarters meaning our sonar had detected a submarine <sup>attacking</sup> ~~endangering~~ our convoy. My job was to set the depth on the depth charges we dropped off the fantail. We came up behind the sub but our rocket charges on the bow missed fired so we passed over the sub and dropped our depth charges.

When we passed over the sub & dropped depth charges (I was setting the depth) & shooting our K guns to spread the depth charge pattern, the flush from the K guns set the packing cases (from the stores we'd taken on) on fire. ~~X~~

\* This put us out in front of the sub's torpedo tubes. \* We prayed that ~~our~~ our "ash cans" would be effective. Our sonar lost contact with the sub so we eventually caught up with the convoy. The next night the radio

\* with the fire on our stern tail so the sub couldn't miss us

us that the 2<sup>nd</sup> atomic Japan had been dropped, and would accept our peace terms.

Though many people were critical of our use of atomic bombs, we knew from the huge losses, both Jap and American, that resulted at ~~both~~ <sup>Iwo Jima</sup> Wake Island and Okinawa, that both countries would sustain hundreds of thousands <sup>of losses</sup> when our planned invasion of Japan occurred in the fall of 1945. Our occupation ~~our invasion~~ forces discovered that our ship, the USS "Lucky" Lovelace D.E. 198, had sunk the last submarine of WW II. Though many called our ship "Lucky", we knew prayer was the most important.

Jack Paulton