

Interview of Spencer F. Hatch

Interviewer: Okay. Well, Spencer, as I said, we want to thank you for coming up here to KUED to give us your story. We appreciate your service and thank you very much for your time and effort, not only when you served but right now for coming up here. Can you tell us where you were when the Japanese first attacked Pearl Harbor and what you were thinking?

Spencer F. Hatch: Certainly. I was sitting in the home of a good friend, Gordon Walton, in Centerville, Utah. It was Sunday, December 7th, 1941, and we heard on the radio that Pearl Harbor had been attacked. We knew that involved our nation and it would soon involve us. We were seniors in high school at the time and we knew that would have a bearing on our future.

Interviewer: Was there an immediate -- did you want to go enlist at that time? What was the thought in your neighborhoods and among your friends and peers in high school?

Spencer F. Hatch: Well, some of our friends did enlist, and I, with others, went to the Marine Corps in Salt Lake City and found out a little bit what it took to enlist. We wanted to finish high school and go on from there. We did finish high school. I enrolled at the university in, uh, Long Beach, rather, in Logan, Utah. The University of--

Interviewer: Utah State?

Spencer F. Hatch: --Utah State University in airplane mechanics. My father suggested that that I might be able to help out the war effort as an airplane mechanic. I spent about six weeks there in that course, and one of my friends, who was also taking the course, suggested that we might want to enlist in the Navy Air Corps. We had recruiters in the city, and three of us went and took some tests, a written and a physical. Of the three of us, two of us passed and enlisted in the Navy

Air Corps. We knew it would be better to come back to clean sheets at the end of the war rather than dirt in a fox hole. That is, as long as the carrier was still afloat and able to land on it. So, that was the course we took. We enlisted in the Navy Air Corps. I went home about a week before I was to report to Price, Utah, for Carbon College where we would get some ground training to learn to fly in a Piper Cub. At home, I met with my parents and they agreed to sign. They were reluctant, but they had to sign for me to enlist, age 18. They signed and my mother said, "Well, when you're out there floating in the Pacific, you remember that we tried to talk you out of it. But it's your wish, and we'll grant it." I went to my stake patriarch to get a patriarchal blessing, and here's what he said in that blessing: "You may pass through many trying scenes, but if you will be humble and prayerful, putting your trust in the Lord, seeking for divine guidance, the Lord will be mindful of you and all will be well." That was a great promise, and it gave me something to live up to, that it might be fulfilled. Fortunately, through the years that followed, I did my best to be humble and prayerful and the Lord did the rest. I came through without a scratch, without a bruise, even though I ended up putting one plane in the bottom of the Pacific, and another shot up when I got it back to the carrier. I lived through that and many other trying scenes that the patriarch saw in advance that would take place in my life.

From there, I went to Price, Utah. We spent several weeks learning to fly the Piper Cub. We had ground training and other activities, and from there where I was later to report to Saint Mary's Preflight School near San Francisco. This was in November of 1942. I reported there and we had training in military, athletics, and, well, just a lot of training preparing us to be naval aviators. From Saint Mary's Preflight, we had a short leave. We went home for a vacation for about a week, and then reported to Pasco, Washington, where we reported to what they called the "E-base". I didn't know it at the time, but the "E" stood for elimination base. That's where they

eliminated lot of these would be naval aviators if they didn't pass the flying test and the ground test. That's where I had one of the great tests of my life. I did great in acrobatics, no problem, but when it came to landing in a 100 foot circle, fully stalled out with a three-point landing -- I had seen pictures in the pilots ready room of what happened when a pilot got too slow and stalled out and spun in and got very seriously killed. I didn't want that to happen to me, so I carried just a little extra air speed when I came in to hit those circles. Fortunately, that caused me to just float over the circle and miss it. I got a down-check on that. My ground grades were good enough that I had another five hours to practice, and then I had to pass two tests of landing in that 100 foot circle. I prayed like never before for help in doing that. I had to promise my mother that I would read a copy of the Book of Mormon that she sent to me on Christmas day in 1942. I carried that Book of Mormon with me in my jacket pocket, to let the Lord know that I meant to do that, to read that book from cover to cover if he'd just let me get through these tests. We took off with the pilot who was "down-check Andrews" -- he was famous for giving down-checks, which means you failed. Here I was, facing this great test. We took off from the main air field, went out to a small field and landed. He said, "Okay, take it up and hit six or eight circles." I took off, very prayerfully, and on my downward approach I received a very spiritual impression that told me how to pass this test. It said, "Look, aim to an imaginary circle in front of the real circle and then you'll float over that and land in the real circle." I did it, and it was a miracle. I was able to pass those tests, not only with "down-check Andrews," but with another instructor I had to pass as well, got through that, super. From there, we went to Corpus Christi, Texas, and were assigned to Cecil Field -- no, rather Beville. Then we had training in instrument training, flying on instruments and other experiences. We passed, and I got my commission and golden wings there in September 1942 from Corpus Christi, Texas. From there, I went to

Jacksonville, Florida and was assigned to Cecil Field to practice carrier landings on the air strip, like it was a carrier, and bombing practice over the Atlantic and other training. There I experienced one of the closest near-death experiences I've ever had. I was talking off in a Douglas Dive-bomber with a 500 pound bomb, full load of ammunition and gas and I took off from the air field and was about 300 feet in the air, leaving the air strip behind me, and they had nothing but tall, Southern pine trees. At that time, the engine started cutting out. Huge billows of smoke came back on both sides of the cockpit. I knew I was in trouble. I turned on the emergency fuel pump, pumped the throttle, and I prayed, "Dear God, help me. Help me. Dear God, help me." And he did. The plane regained sufficient power to let me make a slow bank and head back to the airfield for an emergency landing. I taxied up to the place where we parked the planes, they checked the wheels, I climbed up out of the cockpit, stood on the wing, and I started to shake, realizing close life had come to me, or death had come to me. I stepped down off the wing, and the man from the tower came down and said, "It's a *miracle* you got that plane back. We thought you were a goner for sure." I said to him, "It was a miracle, I'm glad to be back." That night, at the barracks, I stood and looked to the star covered skies and I thanked God for saving my life, giving me a chance to live on and go on for further activity. Well, the plane fortunately got me back. Then we went on from there to Seattle, Washington, where VC-92 was formed, a squadron of torpedo bombers and fighter planes. I was assigned at that time to fly the F4F, the "Wild Cat," the fighter plane. From there, we went to Priori, Illinois, rather, Astoria, Oregon. From there, we went to San Diego, bordered a carrier, and went to the Hawaiian Islands. We did some more training there, then shipped out for combat. On our way from Hawaii to Ulithi Atoll, we assembled with a huge fleet of battle ships, carriers, cruisers, destroyers, and troop ships. That great force assembled there and then we left for the Philippines.

We were going to invade the Philippines, free the country there. On December 31, 1944, I stood on the deck that night of the battle ship, looked into the heavens and I prayed to my Heavenly Father for help in the combat that lied ahead. I talked with God, I felt His presence, and I left with assurance that all would be well. We left.

Interviewer: Let me ask you one question before we leave this training. Can you tell us about the first time you actually landed on an aircraft carrier after your training, or was it during your training when--

Spencer F. Hatch: Yes, we left Cecil Field, Florida and went to Grandview, Illinois, and that's where we landed on a carrier on Lake Michigan, the USS Wolverine -- the carrier that was there on the lake for Navy pilots to practice carrier landings. It was on a stormy December day with choppy waves and clouds and we landed there. That's when I landed on the carrier for the first time with an SPD Douglas dive bomber. That was on experience, I've got to admit, in kind of a stormy day to land on a carrier there in Lake Michigan. The next time we landed on carriers was in the Pacific when we left the Hawaiian Islands on the way to Ulithi Atoll. We even practiced some landings on the USS Saratoga, one of the earlier carriers of that period. It surprised me, we landed and instead of moving back to fly away, we would taxi forward and fly away from there. A long carrier compared with the, USS Tulagi, the "Jeep carrier" that we were assigned to. We assembled at Ulithi Atoll preparing to go into the Philippines, and there, we left the Ulithi on the way to the Philippines on January 1, 1945. A day later, on January 2nd, we staged a kind of a mock attack. Our naval aviator and carriers, we came in like we were attacking a fleet and getting used to some of these maneuvers. That day, on takeoff, with full power on the engine of my fighter plane, I passed the bridge which was then too late to hit the brakes and stay on board if something happened, after passing the bridge, the plane started cutting out, back-

firing, losing power. I had enough power to stay airborne for about 100 yards in front of the carrier, and then losing altitude, the plane settled about five feet off the water. The left wing dripped into the water, the plane lunged forward into the ocean, went over on it's back, the cockpit filled with water, I released the seatbelt, the shoulder straps, and then started swimming in the direction I hoped was up. Pretty soon, water drained out of my goggles and I could see I was on the surface. I looked over my shoulder, saw the carrier heading my way. It looked like the Empire State Building falling on me. I started swimming away from it's path so I wouldn't be drown under the carrier and tangled with the screws at the end. I got away from the carrier. As it went by, it scraped the wing of my plane that was 3/4 submerged. The men on board threw over life savers and a smoke bomb. I waved to them, looped my arms in these live savers and started breathing the smoke from the smoke bomb. I didn't like that, I tried to put it out, holding it under water with both feet, but it had it's own oxygen supply, just kept burning and smoking, so I swam away from it. Then I started thinking about sharks. I inflated my little rubber raft in a hurry, threw my parachute in, climbed on board, and leaned back into this little rubber raft, looked into the skies, blue skies, heavy waves around me, and I thanked God for saving my life again. I floated for about 20 minutes till a destroyer escort came along side to pick me up. One of the officers jumped over board to help me climb up the ladder and to bring my rubber raft and parachute and all on board. We went below deck to what would be the hospital on the ship. The doctor prepared to give an examination, which was standard procedure if they picked up somebody out of the water, and he said, "Would you like a shot of brandy?" I said, "No, thanks, but I could sure go for a tall glass of water." I drank two glasses of water and he said, "You must be a Mormon." I admitted that I was, asking how he knew. He said, well I studied medicine at an eastern university and I got acquainted with a member of the Mormon Church. "He told me

about the word of wisdom, and when you turned down the brandy,” he said, “we had a list of the pilots from your carrier and it showed you coming from Utah and I just put two and two together and figured you were a Mormon.” Well, we became friends. I passed the test, no injures. I got shipped back to my carrier in a breaches board about an hour later, and we went on then to the Philippines. We went through the straits there, going to the west side of the Philippines so that we could go on up and make our troop landings on Lingayen Gulf in Luzon. As we approached Manila, two destroyers came out to attack our fleet. I, with other naval aviators who were launched, attacked these two destroyers, which I did, and I was one of the first fighters to make strafing runs on these destroyers. The flack hit near my plane, it knocked out part of the protection of the canopy, but I kept strafing the deck of the ship and pulled out. We made several runs on that and left one of the destroyers dead in the water, the other circled in a tight circle, and we just went on by to Lingayen Gulf and Luzon where we landed troops. We spent probably 15 or 20 days flying air support for the landing of our troops, and as they approached Manila. We later launched troops at Subic Bay, which was closer to Manila, and we supported those troop landings from the air. We lost one of our torpedo pilots and his two crew members. They took off early one morning before daylight, and we never saw them again. Whether they were shot down by enemy plane or crashed in the water, we don't know, but we lost them. On those runs, we had over 20 of our ships hit. Six of our carriers were hit with Kamikaze pilots who dived into these ships. We took on our carrier some of the burn victims from the Omni Bay when that ship was sunk, carrier. From the Philippines, we went back to Ulithi, to rearm and get ready for the invasion of Iwo Jima. There in Ulithi, I--

Interviewer: Let me ask you, you were doing this attack prior to MacArthur landing on Luzan?

Spencer F. Hatch: Yes.

Interviewer: What was the attitude of your pilots about MacArthur?

Spencer F. Hatch: We loved MacArthur. We thought he was a great general, and in spite of the press and some of the news media in our country, he was a great general. We loved him. We supported him in everything effort. In fact, I supported him later when he, after the war, when he spoke at the convention in Chicago and, when he gave his talk to the full Congress when he came back. He was a great man, a great general.

Interviewer: Were you basically aware when that landing occurred after you had kind of paved the way, as far as MacArthur? Do you know much about that?

Spencer F. Hatch: I take it back, I take it back. He did land on Leyte, I think.

Interviewer: Leyte, that's right.

Spencer F. Hatch: He landed there *before* we went on up to take Manila.

Interviewer: I see, so the troops were on Leyte.

Spencer F. Hatch: On Leyte, we some troops there, exactly. So we went on past there and through the straits and on up to Luzon where we landed troops there. After this, I celebrated my 21st birthday between the Philippines and Ulithi as we were going back to rearm and take our troops up for Iwo Jima. While we were anchored there at Ulithi, I noticed on our roster of ships in the area, I noticed that Admiral Coontz was there. My brother was on that carrier, on that ship, not a carrier, but a troop transport. So I got on a boat and went over and looked him up and invited him and his good friend, Marv Hess. My brother Roy Hatch and Marv Hess had played basketball for Davis High School. Now, they were both in the Marines and on this ship. I invited him and other members there to come over to our carrier to play us a basketball game.

They did, we had two games on the carrier's -- not the main deck, but below, kind of the hanger. They beat us unmercifully. They beat our carrier's team and our squadron's team, but it was good to see my brother there in the Pacific of all places during World War II. Well, he went back to Utah, or back to the states to get more troops, and we went on to Iwo Jima to support our landings there. Iwo Jima was a great battle, a serious battle. We lost a lot of our Marines and other troops when landed on that island. We flew ground air support, dropped napalm bombs, fire bombs on spots where we were to attack the enemy. We had grid charts of the whole island, and they would call us and tell just what part of those grid charts to drop our napalm and strafe the enemy, which we did. We also flew anti-sub patrols, looking for submarines. We were breaking the code of the Japanese at the time, so we knew where these submarines were. We went out looking for them, and if they surfaced, we would get them. If they went underwater, we wouldn't see them. We didn't see any submarines in our flights from our carrier. Then we went back to Imo, or Ulithi, to rearm, regroup, and go on to Okinawa for troop landings there. My squadron, I was a squadron division leader, four planes, fighters. Our division was assigned to escort a new general into Okinawa. We had lost, one of our generals killed. We flew a fighter cover for him and the plane landed. This was shortly after, this was not before the attack on Okinawa, this came later. We went to Okinawa, we attacked some of the fuel depots there, caused great fires. We strafed installations, and it was then before our troops landing that our skipper from our ship was given the assignment to drop thousands of leaflets over the capital city of Okinawa, telling the civilian population how they could surrender when our troops landed to avoid casualties. The skipper chose me as the fighter pilot to protect him on this assignment. We came in from the east to drop our leaflets over this capital city of Okinawa, and as we approached it in a moderate dive, I noticed what looked like a whole lot of trees, a group of trees.

Then I saw a lot of fire coming from those groups of trees, and pretty soon, huge black flacks of, well, the shells were exploding near the plane of my skipper that I was escorting. So he pulled out and I went with him and we came in for another approach for this city from the south. Drew a lot of fire on that run, but were able to get in low enough to drop the leaflets. I continued to strafe some of those guns that were shooting at us, and then I pulled back and went to the ship with my skipper. We landed and then on April 1, our troops landed on Okinawa. We flew fighter cover for air support landings, and then sometimes during the Okinawa war, in fact, this was right in the early stages of it, we were anchored along side an ammunition ship, just a few miles from the main island, Okinawa, taking on ammunition and supplies. On that day, the Japanese sent down 400 suicide planes, Kamikazes, to attack our ships, trying to turn the tide of battle in their favor and protect Okinawa. We had general quarters (inaudible) all pilots went to the ready room in full flight gear, ready to launch if we were called upon. We heard first the 5 inch guns opening. We knew the enemy planes were getting close. Then the 40 millimeters we knew they were closer. Then the 20 millimeters, we knew they were right close to our ship. At that point, one of the naval aviators dropped to the deck and put his planning board over his head as if that would give him some protection if that suicide plane came crashing through our squadron room. Well, after a few more runs, I went up on the deck, I wanted to see which directions these planes were coming from, so I could take some evasive action. Got up on the deck and see a Kamikaze coming from one direction out across the other side of the deck. Then he came from the other direction, back and forth on this deck, and pretty soon, the captain of our ship, there was a lull in fighting in gunning, no Kamikazes at range in the moment, and he ordered to stop firing, "Hold the fire, we're going to launch some planes." My good friend, Stuart Chapen, division leader of a four-plane division took off, and then, as he was circling back

in a normal rendezvous maneuver for his other four plane pilots, one of the guns on the other side of one of these islands started shooting at him. I was up on the deck watching this, and boy, my heart sunk to see our guns shooting at my good friend, Stuart Chapen. They hit his plane, caught fire, he bailed out, and some were shooting at him as a pilot coming down on his parachute. That was real tough to take. He landed in the water uninjured, fortunately, and our captain ordered guns to quit firing. We pulled anchor and got out of there in a hurry, got underway in the ocean, but that was one of the days of trying scenes that I passed through with destroyers being hit by Kamikaze planes in the area. Fortunately, we escaped without a hit -- got out of there. From there, we, sometime later, were sent down to neutralize Miyako and Ishigaki, two islands between Okinawa and Formosa, which is now -- Formosa is Taiwan, but it was Formosa then. We were sent down to neutralize these islands where the enemy was flying planes from Formosa, landing on these two islands, refueling, taking off early the next morning before day light to hit our ships. We were sent down to knock out these two airstrips on these islands. We went down and, the first day, I think this was April 12, April 13, 1945. My good friend, Jack Lean, was shot down over the island of Miyako and killed. Other planes were shot down on those attacks. The next morning, the skipper assigned me and my division to take off and circle that island, looking for survivors, which we did. I had Stuart Chapen, my second division, or second group, protect the PBY that had come down to pick up any survivors, protect them, and my wingman, Tommy Thompson, and I circled the island looking for survivors. We saw a zero take off from the airfield, and we went after it in a hurry. We had some altitude, so we had speed to overtake it. He saw us coming, and he just dived straight into the water -- killed himself. By the way, we had shot down two enemy suicide planes up around Okinawa even before the troops landed, two vowels. I won't go into that now, but after searching this island,

looking for survivors, Miyako, we went back to the ship, had lunch, then we were talking off to hit Ishigaki, the other island. Our skipper led the torpedo planes or bombers, he had me lead the fighters -- as I recall, eight fighters and 12 torpedo bombers, or bombers. As fighter pilots, we were to go in front of the attack of this island, in front of the bombers, and I was leading the fighters, so I was out in front. As we made our attack on this island, they were shooting at us from all over the island, tracers that were about every fourth or fifth shell, you could see. These tracers were going over me, under me, on both sides of me, and I was trying to get those gunners before they got me as were the other pilots of the fighters. We made it through, the bombers came through, dropped some of their bombs. We recovered, came back from the south this time to drop the rest of the bombs off the bombers and we had our rockets to shoot our rockets and continue to fire our .50 caliber shells, which we did. On this run, one of the bomber pilots took a hit, lost a wing, the pilot had time to bail out, the two crewman had not a chance. They went down with the plane and crashed on the island. The naval aviator bailed out and landed near the north end of the runway. I called the fighter planes to join me and we went back to give him some cover from the air. We came in from the west going east showing him the direction to travel to get to the ocean so that what ever submarines or PPY could pick him up. We made many, many runs, shooting at guns and giving him cover, and I ran out of ammunition. We went back down one last time to make a good look, made sure he got free from his parachute harness. I saw that the harness was free, knew that he was free, and at that time, my plane too two hits. One was a big shell that hi the canopy behind me, but I had armored plating that protected me. The shell blew a big hole in the side of the plane, and another shell came through the right wing, just missed the wing tank about a quarter of an inch. But I recovered from that and went back. I lost my radio, I eventually passed the lead to my friend, Frank Sorzy, he eventually took over the

lead of the fighter planes, we made our way back to the carrier and made a landing. Spent about eight or ten hour in the air that day, all in combat, and came back fully drained after that. The skipper came out and looked at my fighter plane, saw this big hole in the side of the fuselage, and the hole in the wing, and he went a couple of shades whiter I think just seeing that. Because of that experience and our efforts to save our pilots -- by the way, he was taken captive but later released after the war, uninjured, returned home -- for that and the escorting the skipper to drop leaflets over the capital city of Okinawa, he recommended me for the Silver Star. However, the person in Washington, who adjusted the recommendation, made it look like the pilot was killed, no chance to recover, and in effect, it made it look like we were running air cover uselessly, risking our own lives, which was false. The Silver Star was not given, but they reduced it to a Distinguished Flying Cross and three air medals. After this, we got back to the carrier, continued to support our troop landings of Okinawa. Later, from there, we went to Guam, left our planes there and came back to the states. That's some of the highlights of the combat we went through, there were a whole lot that time won't allow to go into, but I determined that war is hell, but those who engage in it -- the combatants of our nation supporting our freedom -- are not to be held liable for that. But those who are behind the scenes, who, through secrecy, get us into war and cause a lot of people to be killed, will one day stand before the judgment bar of God and give an accounting of that. Those who took part in the war were fighting for freedom and we lost many of our good people here in the country fighting for war. Now, if you have any questions--

Interviewer: Yeah, I do. When you were on Okinawa, were you anticipating being part of the invasion of the Japanese mainland at the time, or were you aware that might have to take place?

Spencer F. Hatch: Well, we hadn't looked that far ahead. We were looking at day-to-day. We knew we were in real combat there. We knew we were winning the war in Okinawa even though we lost a lot of troops. Usually after about six months in combat, carriers came back and troops came back for at least the time to recover, and then be shipped out again. So now, we felt that we would be involved in the war until it ended, but we didn't know when that would be.

Interviewer: And where were you when you heard of the atomic bomb being dropped? What were your thoughts?

Spencer F. Hatch: I was at home in Utah on leave. This was before our active duty to our reassignment. I was very pleased -- no, I take it back. I take it back. I was, I got home on leave and then went from there to Virginia for reassignment. From there, I was sent to Glenview, Illinois to fly the Corsair, the fast super-fighter plane. It was *there*, Glenview, Illinois, where we learned of the bombs being dropped on Hiroshima. That was where we could see that the war was going to be ending soon. That was a great celebration there, the Naval Aviators and many others.

Interviewer: You were probably destined to participate if they had to invade the main island of Japan?

Spencer F. Hatch: Yes, we would have been sent back on a carrier.

Interviewer: Now, in those days, they didn't have the catapults that shove those fighter planes off today, so you just had to go under your own power to take off?

Spencer F. Hatch: When we were at sea, the carrier would head into the head wind and then we would fly away. If we were at anchor, we did have the catapults and we did shoot the planes out of the catapults.

Interviewer: How about a tail hook on landing, did you have a tail hook?

Spencer F. Hatch: We did, we would come in and the tail hook would catch one of the cables that were stretched across the deck, and they were under hydraulics so they would slow the plane down. If you didn't catch one of those cables with your tail-hook, you would hit into the barrier, the crash barrier up ahead, which would ruin the engine of the plane and the propeller, but kept you from going on into the planes up ahead. Fortunately, even though I carried a little extra air speed when I came in for my landings on the carrier, the landing signal officer knew that and he just gave me an early cut. I'd cut the throttle and come in for a three-point landing. Didn't blow a tire, didn't hit a barrier, didn't have a problem in making carrier landings. Did over 100 of those, but not a problem.

Interviewer: Hmm. When you were serving in the Philippines, did you ever bomb anything around Manila, or were you mainly down where the troops were landing at Leyte?

Spencer F. Hatch: We flew back and forth between the Lingayen Gulf area and Manila. We were shooting up and bombing trains and anything that moved that might be bringing troops to combat our troops. We did ground-air support all the way from Lingayen Gulf to Manila, and then we later gave fighter cover for our troops that landed at Subic Bay, which was down much closer to Manila, and our troops landed there and made it straight towards Manila with very little resistance. We left the Philippines before our troops--

Interviewer: --recaptured Manila?

Spencer F. Hatch: Yeah.

Interviewer: On Iwo Jima, were you aware of any of the ground action that was going on, or when they raised the flag over that mountain and so forth? Or where were you when that happened or when you heard of it?

Spencer F. Hatch: That, I can't recall whether they lifted the flag there at Mount Suribachi before we left Iwo Jima to go and refuel for Okinawa, I don't recall, but we did see our troops landing. We saw just a beat up island, and a whole lot we couldn't see from the air on the ground. We were sent to drop our napalm bombs in certain sectors of that island, and I'll tell you, that was a tough thing to make sure you weren't dropping on your own troops, make sure you were dropping on the enemy. One of our pilots did land on the island and saw some of the things that were going on, but that was later after we'd secured one of the airfields. No, that was a tough battle Iwo Jima.

Interviewer: And Okinawa, were you ever sent up to shoot down Kamikaze planes?

Spencer F. Hatch: Yes, and we were sent out and of course, they would pick up the Kamikaze planes on the radar, and then they would call us and send us to meet them. We were out this one early morning before daylight, and we got a call to fly in a certain direction, certain compass heading to meet a Kamikaze that was in the air. We were sent to intercept this, and a four-plane division -- I'm out in front -- and we finally see the plane we were sent out to meet. We come in from behind him, and when we are in gunning range, we open fire, all four planes, all four fighters open fire on this Kamikaze, and almost disintegrated him there in the air. He went straight down into the ocean, left a big circle of waves. We called in, "Splash one Val," well, with the kind of plane it was. Then, soon, we were sent in another direction to meet another

Kamikaze plane. As we approached that, we saw F6S Hellcats making attacks on this Kamikaze, but they were coming at from behind making runs, and he would turn and evade them. So we came in low, and firing at this Kamikaze plane, I made the one run and then came back, circling back, going to come behind him and really strafe him, but he turned in towards me, so I went in underneath him and I looked up and I could see him in the cockpit. I could see his helmet, his goggles, the closest I really came to the enemy during World War II. I recovered from this and then came back behind him, strafed him, his plane caught fire, the left wing dipped in the water and he cart wheeled into the water -- took care of him. Called in, "Splash, one more Val." Then after our period of time looking for, waiting to be sent out to meet suicide planes, our time ran out and we went back to the carrier.

Interviewer: Those were interesting stories. Elizabeth, have you got any questions?

Elizabeth: Yeah, I do. First of all, I'm curious about, can you expand on those who secretly got us into this war? What exactly do you mean by that?

Spencer F. Hatch: All right, I didn't know it at the time, but I did keep the promise to my mother, and I read the Book of Mormon from cover to cover on board ship. I read then and under lined in the 8 chapter of Ether about how the Jaredites were destroyed by secret combinations, the Nephites were destroyed by secret combinations, and how the secret combinations are out to destroy the freedom of all nations today. In fact, Moroni, who abridged the writings of Ether, was commanded by the Lord to include that chapter 8, letting us know what's going on in our day. Now, he spoke of secret combinations, we had them going on even in the time of World War II. I didn't know about it then, I've since learned about it. President Franklin D. Roosevelt knew that the enemy, the Japanese, were going to attack, and he failed, in effect, made it a point

not to let our general and Admiral in the Hawaiian Islands know about this. So they took the raid, took the attack, and then the next day, Franklin D. Roosevelt declared war on Japan and on Germany. Now, this was all part of a secret combination to bring America into the war against Germany. We did it by attacking Japan. Now, my sister worked as a secretary to Senator Elbert D. Thomas, who was a senator back in Washington at the time. Before Pearl Harbor, she in letter to me told me we were much closer to war with Japan than we were with Germany. Now, I didn't know it at the time, but there were negotiations going on and the United States made it so that Japan, to save face, and to continue their war, had to attack the United States. They attacked us at Pearl Harbor, thinking that they would continue and the war would be over, or we would withdraw or seek early peace with them. But there were secret combinations going on then. And they've continued to go on. They're going on today in the world today. Let me give you an example.

Elizabeth: Wait, wait, talk to Rick.

Interviewer: Talk to me.

Spencer F. Hatch: Okay. Our President, George Bush, met in El Paso, Texas, with President Fox from Mexico and the Prime Minister from Canada. They met in El Paso, Texas, and agreed to establish the North American Union, combine Mexico, USA and Canada into the North American Union, much like the European Union where the countries there gathered together to form the European Union governed by bureaucratic elites, not by their individual countries. Bush and Fox and Canada were out to combine these three countries into the North American Union, much like the European Union, doing away with our borders, our constitution, our sovereignty, and our freedom. Now, our Utah state senators and the representatives have sworn

to obey the constitution, defend the constitution. So, a group that I have joined called The Constitution Coalition, we met with the President of our state senate, John Valentine, a year ago, laid on his in his lap all this information that supports this secret combination, not supports, but makes available what they're trying to do. He took that information and did his own investigation, and concluded that there is a secret combination trying to destroy our freedom in America, combine Mexico, USA, and Canada into the North American Union. He and other senators voted 25 to 0 asking the United States to withdraw from this security and prosperity partnership in North America, the SPP, which is set up to take us into this North American Union. They want our US senators and representatives to withdraw from this SPP. So our senators in Utah and our representatives know what's going on. But unfortunately, the news media in America had been taken over by trillions of dollars from Europe, and they control what goes out to the media, to the people. They control it. Now, I doubt that this will ever hit the airwaves because I suspect TV's are controlled, as well as radios and newspapers, but I want to share it. I love America, I want to protect America. I swore to defend the constitution when I joined the Navy Air Corps many years ago. I still value that oath, and unfortunately, many people in America do not.

Elizabeth: I have another. Can you tell me about how you felt about the enemy, the Japanese and the Germans? Was it a different feeling?

Spencer F. Hatch: A good question. When we met at Ulithi Atoll setting up this big fleet to land our troops on the Philippine Islands, we were shown several films that made it look like the Japanese were just evil people. They had done this to China and so forth, much of it was true, but much of it was just propaganda to help us--

Interviewer: Look at me.

Spencer F. Hatch: --help us want to fight the Japanese, to kill them. They're an enemy, they're just bad people. Well, they were just like Americans. They were doing what they were asked to do by their government and felt they were doing the right thing. So, no, we got all kinds of propaganda to help us feel that we should go out and just kill those enemies. In fact, I got a letter from one of my younger sons, younger brothers, and he said, "Get one of those yellow bellies for me." Well, this is just passing out propaganda that he had heard from our own news media.

Elizabeth: Did you think about the Germans at all?

Spencer F. Hatch: Well, in junior high school, in a civics class, we were talking about Germany and Japan and we had had a lot of propaganda then about these two countries, opposing them, and I remember saying to my teacher, "Well, if Japanese are Japs, does that make Germans 'Germs?'" And a little laugh from the class, and the instructor took it okay because we were being propagandized even then against Japan and Germany.

Interviewer: Well, that's interesting. Anything else, Liz?

Elizabeth: How he feels about it 65 years later.

Spencer F. Hatch: Well, looking back on the war, I am grateful for the loyalty of the Army, the Navy, the Marines, those who fought for their country. But I am seriously concerned about some of the leadership that got us into that war that we didn't have to have and the same thing about leadership even today that is getting us into wars that we shouldn't be in. I suspect that if our administration has its way, we'll at least invade or bomb seriously Iran. We pretty well

destroyed Iraq, and, no, I think this is part of the secret combination that Moroni warned us about in the book of Ether. We should not be fighting these foreign wars.

Elizabeth: You think we should have fought World War II? Was there a reason to fight World War II?

Spencer F. Hatch: I believe if we had stayed out of the war, I don't know what would have happened in Germany and England and Europe, but we wouldn't have had all the casualties we've had in America. I believe it was wrong to get us into the war by leading, by bringing Japan to a point where they would attack us.

Interviewer: You believe that Roosevelt knew that they were going to attack at Pearl Harbor?

Spencer F. Hatch: I believe he knew they were going to attack, someplace, and I believe he knew they were going to attack Pearl Harbor. Others in the administration knew that we were being led into war. I believe they'll pay a price when they get to the other side, the day of judgment comes for them.

Interviewer: Spence, we appreciate you coming

End of recording.