



*The Honorable John H. Dalton*  
Secretary of the Navy



*General John M. Shalikashvili*  
Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff



THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20350-1000  
17 September 1997

Captain Richard C. Perkins, USN  
Commanding Officer  
USS NEW ORLEANS (LPH 11)  
PFO AP 96627-1650

Dear Captain Perkins:

As USS NEW ORLEANS hauls down her colors after twenty-nine years of patriotic service, I would like to express my appreciation to all her officers and crew, as well as to all of those who have served aboard her during her long and distinguished career.

Through nearly three decades, NEW ORLEANS has returned our Nation's investment well beyond all expectations. The ability to project power from the sea has always been one of our Navy's strengths. In the years since World War II our Navy-Marine Corps amphibious team has proven itself a potent weapon in conflict and a significant force for preserving our peace and freedom. From Vietnam to the Persian Gulf and Somalia, you and your ship have demonstrated your versatility and skill. Thanks to the professionalism of her crew, NEW ORLEANS has carried out her demanding mission with honor and has shown herself an essential part of our first-line strength.

Now that NEW ORLEANS' tour of duty is over, those who served with her can take pride in her many contributions to America's defense and in the proud tradition of duty well done that she has created. In each of you, NEW ORLEANS' spirit will sail on.

Sincerely,

*John H. Dalton*  
John H. Dalton



CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20318-9999

September 1997

TO THE OFFICERS AND CREW  
OF  
USS NEW ORLEANS

On the occasion of her decommissioning, it is a privilege to honor a proud ship and the sailors who served her during three decades of honored service to our Nation.

For almost 30 years, NEW ORLEANS has been at the forefront of freedom, demonstrating our national resolve in peace and war. From Vietnam to the Persian Gulf, she served with honor and distinction. Her record of service on all the oceans of the world is a stirring chapter in the history of our great Navy. The exemplary teamwork and dedication of her crew were worthy of a great ship and are in keeping with the highest standards of military service.

On behalf of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the men and women of the United States Armed Forces, congratulations on a sterling record of achievement over many years. We share your pride, and welcome this proud vessel to an honored rest - until the Nation calls once again on NEW ORLEANS.

May you always have fair winds and following seas!

Sincerely,

*John M. Shalikashvili*  
JOHN M. SHALIKASHVILI  
Chairman  
of the Joint Chiefs of Staff