



*Vice Admiral Brent M. Bennett*  
**COMNAVAIRPAC**



*Vice Admiral A. J. Kreckich*  
**COMNAVSURFPAC**



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
COMMANDER NAVAL AIR FORCE  
UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET  
BOX 237051  
SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA 92123-7051

October 31, 1997

Captain R.C. Perkins, U.S. Navy  
Commanding Officer  
USS NEW ORLEANS (LPH 11)  
FPO AP 96627-1650

Dear Captain Perkins,

The decommissioning of USS NEW ORLEANS (LPH 11) sadly marks the end of a fine ship's career. During her 29 years of commissioned service, NEW ORLEANS has seen tremendous changes in world order and has proudly stood the watch.

USS NEW ORLEANS represents a proud segment of our naval heritage and traditions. She has served with distinction and made great contributions to our nation's defense during both the Vietnam and Persian Gulf conflicts. She has provided humanitarian assistance to many thousands of people in Somalia and other regions. She has carried out our foreign policy for almost three decades, always ready to sail where America needed her.

Since arriving in her homeport of San Diego in 1969, NEW ORLEANS has also made significant contributions to Naval Aviation. While some may have overlooked the big deck amphib's role, NEW ORLEANS' achievements have kept her firmly in the spotlight. From her flight deck the first AV-8 Harrier operations in the Pacific were conducted. A winner of the Admiral Flatley Aviation Safety Award, she was the first LPH to launch and recover Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs).

Beyond her vital role on the Navy-Marine Corps Team as a key participant in littoral operations, NEW ORLEANS also has the distinction of participating in America's space program. She recovered astronauts from the Apollo 14, Skylab II, Skylab IV and Apollo/Soyuz Test Project Missions. NEW ORLEANS also participated in the longest over water air-sea rescue, as well as numerous rescues and medical evacuations of both civilians and military personnel. Her list of credits even includes a 'starring role' in the recent film Apollo 13.

Although her active duty life comes to a close, NEW ORLEANS' many contributions will be remembered by those whose lives she has touched. Her crew and officers, past and present, will always share in the distinction of having served as one of "The Enforcers" aboard the mighty ship USS NEW ORLEANS.

Most sincerely and with great respect for a superb ship,

*Brent M. Bennett*  
BRENT M. BENNITT  
Vice Admiral, U.S. Navy



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
COMMANDER NAVAL SURFACE FORCE  
UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET  
2544 RENDOVIA ROAD  
SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA 92155-5490

12 August 1997

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

Dear Captain Perkins,

Congratulations to you and your crew who have served proudly on USS NEW ORLEANS (LPH 11). The decommissioning of NEW ORLEANS will mark the end of a truly historic period in our Nation's naval history.

Commissioned nearly 29 years ago at the height of the Cold War, NEW ORLEANS' long career is a symbol of our Nation's commitment to maritime security and freedom. NEW ORLEANS served with pride in numerous campaigns from Vietnam to the Gulf War. Her outstanding record of humanitarian service has been equally significant. She has been a critical asset in maintaining our "Forward From the Sea" mission and has responded superbly in every contingency. Since her commissioning, NEW ORLEANS has also accomplished an impressive record of firsts including the first Harrier and UAV flight operations on an LPH.

Although decommissioning brings USS NEW ORLEANS' contributions to an end, all Americans will remain grateful for the sacrifices of the thousands of Sailors and Marines who have served on her decks. The pride and tradition of service felt by crew members and friends of USS NEW ORLEANS will remain forever in our hearts. You have given this nation nearly three decades of faithful service, and leave behind a shining legacy of excellence for others to follow.

I commend both past and present USS NEW ORLEANS crew members and wish you "Fair Winds and Following Seas".

Sincerely,

*A. J. Kreckich*  
A. J. KREKICH  
Vice Admiral, U.S. Navy

