

18 September 1972

Remove Watermark Now

Dear WARRINGTON Families and Friends,

I thought that I had answered all of your letters, but you're too good for me - I now owe letters to Mr. and Mrs. JEROME, Mr. and Mrs. DEITT, Mrs. MESSERO, Mrs. BARR and Mrs. CRAIG. For the rest of you who so thoughtfully have written to me, responses to your good letters are in the mail. As I previously have mentioned to many of you, it is personally rewarding to me as Commanding Officer to have had these individual contacts with you all, and your words of prayer, support and encouragement have been a significant source of strength to me. I'll never forget you and your WARRINGTON men. Now to pass on some information regarding the decommissioning of WARRINGTON.

Since my last letter to you, the Navy's Chief of Naval Operations (CNO), Admiral ZUMWALT, forwarded Rear Admiral BUCKELEY's recommendation (to decommission WARRINGTON and to strike her from the naval vessel register) to the Secretary of the Navy for final approval; and, on 12 September, CNO announced that Secretary WARNER had approved such recommendation, to take place on 1 October at Subic Bay, Republic of the Philippines. Although some official actions at various levels of command were held in abeyance pending Mr. WARNER's approval, your men and I, as well as our superiors in the Atlantic and Pacific Fleets, commenced preparations for decommissioning, shortly after Admiral BUCKELEY's survey on 22-25 August. Now for the details concerning your men.

On Monday, 18 September, Thirty-five WARRINGTON men, who were authorized release from their active duty obligations up to seven months early (from 1 October) departed WARRINGTON for the Continental United States (CONUS) via Military Airlift Command (MAC) flights from Clark Air Force Base in northern Luzon, Republic of the Philippines. Upon arrival in CONUS they will be separated from the Navy, probably at the Naval Receiving Station Treasure Island. The exact dates of their arrival in CONUS and separation cannot be known, but should occur well before the remainder of the crew reaches CONUS. The names of those persons so authorized early release are as follows:

TM3 C.E. CARROLL	MM3 P.J. DALY JR.	FTG2 R.K. BRIDGEMAN
QM3 D.R. HOWARD	HT3 T.L. KERLEY	HT2 M.A. MCVEY
BT3 W.H. YOUNG JR.	BT3 G.R. STATZER	SA D.R. BURGER
MR3 R.T. PUGH	MM3 D.J. FRANGELLA	SA M.D. KELLEY
MM3 F.C. GORMAN JR.	EM3 D.C. SHOVLIN	GMGSN R.J. MCMULLEN
RM1SN R.M. POST	IC3 J.W. VANICKY	MMFN R.P. NEWCOMB
GMG3 G.E. SHOFFNER	BM3 F.J. GULLO	SN D.C. CRAIG
BM3 W.G. STORY	STG2 M.A. SHORT	SN D.M. GAUVIN
FTG3 A.F. KULLER	YN2 J.R. FULLER	SN M.E. JOWERS
FTG3 D.J. SCOTT	IC2 S.G. LYNE	SN L.A. HARTLEY
FTG3 J.C. COPPOLA	RM2 L.G. MEANY	SN B.J. ALLEN
BM3 W.T. BARTELMANN	RM2 S.D. GULICK	

And now, dear families and friends, a parting thought from me personally. Those letters and the effort that has gone into their writing symbolize a paramount belief of mine - that the family is the backbone of every major private and government institution in our country, including the Navy. The family man - and we all are, from parents or our own wives and children - can take the sense of belonging to a family every where he goes in this world, together with and as a part of belonging to his God - weaken, disregard, laugh at, forget, or turn off those ties and he is a weakened man. I have seen many times the man most hardened to military authority respond in heartfelt fashion to concerns of his family. If we can remember this, and do whatever we can, both in the Navy and in civilian life, to keep the family together, we will have a stronger Navy and a stronger Nation. In this interest alone have I devoted a considerable number of hours to these letters. And I have felt amply rewarded for the effort by your responses and the responses of your men. We have all been united by our mutual concerns to take care of the Family, and that's the way it should be. So, God Bless and keep you all together and safe. And keep the letters coming - I'm not hanging up my pen!

My warmest personal regards,



*Noel H. Petree, Jr.*

Noel H. PETREE, Jr.  
Commander, U.S. Navy  
Commanding Officer  
USS WARRINGTON (DD-843)

been genuinely impressed by the sensitive manner in which the detailers in the Bureau of Naval Personnel, and in the Enlisted Personnel Distribution Office, U.S. Atlantic Fleet, have assigned your men. Our Type Commander in Newport, Rear Admiral WESCHLER, has also been of tremendous assistance in maintaining a close liaison with higher authority regarding distribution of personnel. LCDR MCKELVEY and I have been in daily contact with these offices, and they have given overnight favorable response to many of the individuals problems which we have raised. At present there are approximately thirty-five such unsolved cases on which our manning representatives in CONUS are working. The XO and I have tried, in every case of valid personal hardship which was brought to our attention, to arrange an accommodation of the individual's needs, and I will continue until I no longer have the authority to do so. I hope that these words will help to soften the disappointment which many of you must feel for not being able to see your WARRINGTON men for several months. The humanitarian concern for reassigning the battle-tested WARRINGTON crew back to CONUS has been partly overcome by a higher concern for the other war ships out here who critically need your men.

Incidentally, for those of you who are interested, I am pleased to announce that I have received orders to command the Newport-based destroyer BASILONE (DD-824), a cross-town rival and squadron-mate of WARRINGTON for many years and a twin of WARRINGTON. After approximately three months of temporary duty in Newport, I'll assume command of BASILONE in February or March. I love these old fighting ships and could not be happier with my orders.

Related to the above discussion are some thoughts concerning the Navy's Project TRANSITION that I'd like to pass on to the families of men leaving the Navy now or in the future. The TRANSITION from military to civilian life can, at times, be a traumatic experience. The TRANSITION Program is designed to smooth this process. However, many of our people have misunderstood the nature of the program. TRANSITION is primarily a counseling program. The counseling, as provided at the Navy's 14 TRANSITION Sites, will help an individual identify the alternatives open to him in order for him to reach a career decision. During the counseling sessions an individual learns effective job search techniques, how to conduct himself in a job interview situation, how to prepare a resume, and how to translate his military skills and experiences into civilian terms. He is given job placement assistance and is fully briefed on the services available to him through the Veterans Administration. For most of our separating or returning personnel, counseling is all that is necessary to ensure that suitable and worthwhile employment will be found. Certain individuals-through lack of education, training, or experience approach the end of their service with a need for additional assistance. This can be provided through the TRANSITION Program also. Commanding Officers may release their people from duty to participate in a vocational training program under the auspices of TRANSITION. The training when offered, usually is from three weeks to eight weeks in length depending on the needs of

On the same day, I presented my letters of appreciation to the following men for their humanitarian service during the Philippines flood disaster last month: HT3 Gerard ROONEY, BT3 Joseph MARKOWSKI, Seaman Paul BURT, Seaman Thomas ROBART, and Seaman Thomas YOUNG, and MMFN Edward DELTT. Subsequent to my last letter to you, in which I mentioned the services by the above volunteers, President of the Philippine Republic Ferdinand MARCOS cited the rescue efforts by your men and other members of the U.S. Armed Forces. Finally commended by me were the Combat Information Center Team who on 9 July foiled an attempt by an enemy intruder to bring WARRINGTON gunfire to bear on friendly troops near Quang Tri City, Republic of Vietnam. The members of this team, whose names follow, were cited by the Commander USAF Special Communications Center for their vigilance and high state of training in thwarting the enemy's attempt: ENS Barry DOUGHERTY, RD1 Keith SWOVERLAND, RD2 John CALLAHAN, RD3 Robert MULLEN, and RDSN Joseph DASHNER.

Although action was being taken at the time of my last letter to stop the flow of replacement personnel to WARRINGTON, several real fine people have reported aboard since 27 August. These are:

ENS John DILLINGHAM	RMSN Ronald UPSHAW
SN(FC) Ronald YARNELL	SN Ronald KRISTIENSEN

And, as we receive new WARRINGTON men, we must lose some mighty fine sailors who have meant alot to this ship and to the Navy:

RM1 Bobby BOUNDS	MM2 Larry JOHNSON
HT3 Earl ROBINSON	MMFN Darrell COURTNEY

WARRINGTON men are still taking advantage of the outstanding recreational facilities which the Naval Station Subic Bay has offered. The bowling league has been especially successful, as has softball. On 15 September, the WARRINGTON softball team came from behind 10-3 in the seventh inning to hand a loss to the Mighty MIDWAY. On 16 and 17 September ENS Dave CAHOON and his band of helpers set up the crew to two outstanding afternoons in the sun at Dungaree Beach, Naval Air Station Cubic Point. Swimming, beer, volleyball, and bar-b-que chicken made these last get-togethers memorable occasions. Helping Mr. CAHOON with the picnic were:

SN Gregg WILFINGER	RD2 Richard CRUTCHLEY
CS2 Ralph SCHENDEL	HT3 Gerard ROONEY
STG3 David BURNS	

Finally, on 15 September MM1 Russell HOY and DT1 Harry PIEPER convened the WARRINGTON First Class Petty Officers, invited the XO and me, and presented the Mess President, Staff NCO Club Subic Bay, with a WARRINGTON placque, followed by very splendid dinner and drinks at the NCO Club. That club is truly a gentleman's club and has meant alot to our First Class Petty Officers.

the individual; and, it may occur any time during the last six months of enlistment. Control must be exercised to ensure only those with bonafide need for training are offered an opportunity. Too often in the past TRANSITION training has been used as a reward for the well-trained, successful Petty Officer who, in all probability, will have very little trouble finding suitable employment. It is those individuals lacking motivation, education or skills who most need vocational training and who should have an opportunity to receive it. For those unable to obtain this opportunity prior to EAOS, the Navy has designated 11 Skill Centers where certain categories of personnel in pay grades E-4 and below may be transferred to receive training after their normal EAOS. Those eligible should be motivated to extend their enlistments for two months for this purpose. So, encourage your WARRINGTON man to utilize TRANSITION before his time for transition comes along. I intend to use it!

On 28 August, I had the distinct privilege and genuine pleasure to present the following persons with the nation's oldest military award, the Purple Heart, for injuries which these men received in combat on 17 July: LTJG Jerry OLIVER, Seaman Stephen BURKE, Seaman Frederick CRANDALL, and Fireman Philip WHITAKER. I also presented the Third Award of Good Conduct to MM1 Norman SMILEY, one of WARRINGTON's most respected senior petty officers. Additionally, I presented LT Dave DWYER and LTJG Pete REGNIER with my letter certifying their qualification as Officers of the Deck, one of the most highly regarded qualifications for unusual responsibility throughout the military and civilian vocations. Once again, the authority to present these awards and qualifications is one of the most cherished rewards for the responsibility as Commanding Officer, and I relish each of such opportunities, as I have personally relayed to the families of the above men.

On 1 September, John MARTIN and John CHARLES received certificates and emblems of their advancement to FTG3 and MM3 respectively, and were administered the Federal Oath of Office upon assuming elevated responsibilities as Navy Petty Officers. I know that the families of those men are very proud of them.

On 13 September, I presented First Awards for Good Conduct to ETR2 Douglas HALL and STG2 John LOUTHAN. Commended by me at this time were YN2 Jon FULLER and SH3 John MONTANA for their valuable services and outstanding performances for WARRINGTON during their tour. Jon FULLER was a jack of all trades for the ship and did an outstanding job in each of them - Legal Yeoman, Acting Postal Clerk, and Mess Deck Master-at-Arms. It is all the more remarkable that FULLER volunteered to fill the latter two jobs concurrent with his other responsibilities as Yeoman. John MONTANA has been everybody's favorite as Ship's Store Operator and Ship's Store Recordkeeper. Sometimes that store looked like Fibber McGee's closet, but John always knew where everything was located and always had in stock the articles that mean so much to ease of living on a destroyer.

Speaking of placques, ENS CAHOON and ENS Pete PERKUNN have arranged to provide each WARRINGTON man before leaving, or by mail, with a WARRINGTON placque and a collection of pictures, words and memorabilia by which to remember the ship and this last cruise. Doing most of the work on these projects are:

ENS Pete PERKUNN  
TN Ronald SCOTT  
SN Lonnie SILSBY  
MMFN Edward DEITT  
MM3 Paul DUFILIE  
RDSN Andrew GORDON  
FN Gregory ABBOT

MMFN Christian DUBCZYK  
FN Noel CODDING  
FTG3 John MARTIN  
SN Gregg WILFINGER  
FN Robert PULLINS  
ETR3 David ROWE

And one item before I close what will probably be my last general letter to you all - I must confess to basking in your warmth and gratitude for bringing WARRINGTON back to port and for going to bat for your men, when most of the credit for the nitty-gritty of successfully managing the ship during this period must go to one of the finest Executive Officers who ever strode the decks of a tin-can, LCDR Harv MCKELVEY. His loyalty to me and to the ship during this period were ingredients in the shipboard life without which this entire operation would have been a miserable failure. The Executive Officer is the executor for the Commanding Officer - he executes my programs and policies, and keeps them going. There is no one more sensitive to the heartbeat of the officers and men of WARRINGTON and the Navy, and no one more dedicated to their betterment. To LCDR MCKELVEY who is reporting to the Staff of the U.S. Naval Destroyer School at Newport - the Mecca of destroyer professionalism - I know that you join me in extending our heartfelt gratitude and wishing a successful and happy tour for him and his family.

And I could not close this letter without extending, on the behalf of all WARRINGTON families and friends, my sincere thanks and highest praise for the service performed for WARRINGTON families by my wife Ruth Ann, the XO's wife Mrs. Janet MCKELVEY, Mrs. Marie RUTLEDGE, the wife of my outstanding and faithful Senior Enlisted Advisor and Leading Machinist Mate, and Mrs. Bobbye KEITH, the wife of my superior Career Counselor and Leading Radioman. As I have expressed to many persons, and as reported to me by my superiors in Newport, these OMBUDSWOMEN are the main reason that the past period from 5 June, but especially since 17 July, has been so trouble free. I know that each of these Navy wives have in concert, and individually on a countless number of occasions, taken action to provide information and counselling without which unbearable anxieties and concerns would have been borne by many of you, possibly contributing to the unbelievable strain under which all of your men have been during the cruise. Each of these ladies undoubtedly are mothers and housewives first, but when the need has arisen, such as on 17 July, they were there and ready to help for as long as they were needed. We all will be eternally grateful for the devotion to community spirit which you ladies have steadfastly demonstrated. I hope we husbands can get back in a hurry and give you a break - you rate it!

Further, approximately eighty of your WARRINGTON men have been ordered to fill critical jobs in Atlantic Fleet Ships which are currently operating for an extended period with the U.S. Seventh Fleet in support of Southeast Asia operations. Since their names are too numerous to list in this letter, and since the list is still fluid, suffice it to say that all but about fifteen of these men are younger, non-rated men (seaman, fireman), and they will return to CONUS with their new commands upon tour completion out here. I have been authorized to grant regular leave for those persons assigned to ships over here who so desire, who indicate to me a valid need to return to CONUS, and who can afford the transportation expense. I must caution you that the urgency placed on getting these men to their ships over here dictates that I be particularly restrictive in the numbers of men for whom I grant regular leave.

Another approximately eighty-four of your men have been designated to maintain the security of the ship and to help me complete preparations for decommissioning WARRINGTON. Thirteen officers, five chief petty officers, and approximately sixty-six other enlisted persons will remain with me until, or shortly after 1 October. We will then follow the other WARRINGTON men through Clark and Travis AFB's and on to our homes or our next duty stations.

The above arrangements for detaching your WARRINGTON men do not discuss another sixty-six men who have been assigned to other ashore and afloat commands in CONUS or in Europe, and who are not in the decommissioning crew. Such persons will be detached commencing 18 September, as seats become available in MAC flights leaving Clark AFB. These persons will debark from such flights in CONUS, probably at Travis AFB in California, to proceed either to their next duty station or to their homes on leave. Of course, their travel expenses to their next duty stations are paid for by the Navy. That takes care of the detachment plans for all of us. Now for some general comments regarding the arrangements described above.

As I indicated in my last letter, we WARRINGTON men would have been very happy to decommission the ship and to fly back to the states together - all of us; and, this has been the thrust of my efforts for the past month, and such efforts have been magnificently supported all the way to the highest levels of the Navy. All of us in positions of management in the Navy, however, have met face-to-face during this effort on WARRINGTON's behalf with the facts that (1) other ships in the SEVENTH Fleet have endured hardships under conditions of being severely undermanned to do their jobs in a wartime environment, especially among the ranks of younger, non-rated men; (2) current expenses of moving Navy men have severely exceeded budget expectations and drastic revisions to plans for rotating people to and from the fleet have been effected; and, (3) the shortage of personnel in SEVENTH Fleet ships can be partly offset by battle-tested WARRINGTON men who can report with little delay and who do not require expensive travel arrangements. By and large, I have