



*Commander, Naval Surface Force
United States Atlantic Fleet*

2 August 2004

To the Crew of USS TICONDEROGA:

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to reflect and comment on the distinguished 21-years of service of (CG 47), and congratulate you on the exceptional preparations for her decommissioning.

As we say farewell to USS TICONDEROGA, know that the Officers, Chiefs and Sailors who served on her are representative of our nation's best. The number of successful missions, exercises and deployments this great warship has performed and completed is a testament to her legacy! Our Navy has a rich heritage of service and commitment to the defense of our great nation - USS TICONDEROGA and her crews, past and present, have added immeasurably to that heritage.

I'm proud to have had the opportunity to observe the service of the TICONDEROGA first-hand. From her commissioning in 1983 to the present, we have witnessed the skill and leadership of those privileged to sail her. We cheered the success of the men and women who answered the call of our country in the far corners of the world.

As we retire (CG 47), I want to again say thank you to the crew for your service. I hope that this ceremony is memorable for all in attendance. TICONDEROGA's name will be remembered proudly in the hearts and souls of all who sailed in her and with her.

Sincerely,

T. T. ETNYRE
Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy