

USS LONG BEACH CGN-9
c/o Fleet Post Office
New York City, New York

At Sea
North Atlantic
7 July 1961

Dear Dwight:

I know you will be interested in learning that the USS LONG BEACH, our first nuclear powered surface ship, has successfully completed her propulsion plant trials and is now enroute to Boston, Massachusetts. The ship made her design full power; in fact she exceeded it. During these trials she demonstrated capability to meet all maneuvering requirements, including emergency stops and fast reversals.

This 14,000 ton ship has two pressurized water nuclear power plants. She is 721 feet in length and has a beam of 70 feet. She is commanded by Captain Eugene P. Wilkinson, USN, who was also the first captain of the NAUTILUS.

The Navy also has under construction the nuclear powered aircraft carrier ENTERPRISE to be completed this year and the destroyer leader BAINBRIDGE to be completed in 1962; an additional nuclear powered destroyer leader was authorized this year. These surface ships are in addition to the 61 nuclear powered submarines authorized, of which 29 are Polaris type; 21 are now in operation, of which 6 are Polaris.

The advent of this ship marks an historic first step in the development of our nuclear powered surface fleet. Her operation will make possible the first realistic evaluation of nuclear powered naval surface ships with their practically unlimited high speed endurance and operational flexibility. Once her potentialities are understood the LONG BEACH may well have the significance for surface naval warfare that the NAUTILUS had for undersea warfare.

Sincerely,



H.G. RICKOVER

Mr. Dwight A. Ink,
Assistant General Manager
U.S. Atomic Energy Commission
Washington 25, D.C.