

U. S. S. HENRY CLAY (SSBN 625)

CARE OF FLEET POST OFFICE
NEW YORK, N. Y. 09501

At Sea
North Atlantic
7 January 1964

Dear Admiral Benson:

We have just successfully completed the first sea trials of the USS HENRY CLAY, our seventeenth Polaris type nuclear submarine.

The HENRY CLAY was built by the Newport News Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Company.

We also have in operation eighteen attack type nuclear submarines, making a total of thirty-five. When all nuclear submarines authorized by Congress are completed the United States will have forty-one Polaris and forty-seven attack submarines.

This ship, a powerful instrument of peace and the enforcement of right dealing among nations is most fittingly named for Henry Clay. Virginian, Kentuckian, American, his aphorism "I'd rather be right than be President," has become part of our political heritage. His reputation as "the great compromiser" has been universally recognized, not as a yielding to any pressure to abandon principles but a constant desire to sacrifice the personal interest where the national interest required it.

At the end of his long life of service, the eulogy of a onetime political opponent aptly quoted the poet's lines --

Born when freedom her stars and stripes unfurl'd,
When revolution shook the startled world --
Heroes and sages taught his brilliant mind
To know and love the rights of all mankind.

Sincerely,

H. G. Rickover
H.G. Rickover

Rear Admiral Roy S. Benson, USN
Assistant Vice Chief of Naval
Operations
Department of the Navy
Washington 25, D.C.