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June 6, 2002

Mr. Charles Tallie  
President  
USS South Dakota Veterans, Inc.  
% The USS South Dakota Newsletter  
465 Glendale Road  
Buffalo Grove, Illinois 60089

Dear President Tallie:

I am delighted to receive the latest issue of the USS South Dakota Newsletter. I refer to Volume V, Issue II which reached my office in the early days of this month, June 2002. I congratulate you and those who produce such a product on a regular basis. But, even though I have not been able to maintain close relationships with all that's going on with The South Dakota, I continue to be one of those men who could never forget the days on The South Dakota, even those days before our ship was commissioned, and throughout the battles of the first two years of The South Dakota's extraordinary career.

Just in passing, it is truly somewhat difficult for me to reach a point where I can actually believe that the commissioning of our ship took place sixty years ago/I was there. I was an Ensign. I had already been assigned a bunk on The South Dakota while it was still in drydock in Camden. I did serve on the SODAK for months and months before our ship was formally commissioned on March 20, 1942. But, it will be totally not surprising to you or anyone that I remember vividly almost everything that took place in the battles of The South Dakota's legendary history in the South Pacific, and even during the unusual trip when we served with the British Home Fleet from February to July '43 over in the European and Northern Atlantic Waters. I remembered Admiral Nimitz, and I remember Admiral Halsey. And, of course, I remember with appreciation that famous United States Navy legendary CEO, Captain Thomas Gatch.

I send this letter to you now in order to express my profound respects to the officers and men who served on the South Dakota in the earliest days of its life when an extraordinary number of military experiences occurred in the life of that unique vessel. I am not surprised that the SODAK received 13 battle stars and became one of only four Battleships ever to receive The Navy Unit Commendation.

Sincerely yours,



Sergeant Shriver