

# *I want to talk to the Chiefs who are here today.*

As your Secretary, but perhaps more importantly as an honorary Master Chief Petty Officer, I want to talk to the Chiefs who are here today.

You and I have had a special relationship because I know the relationship you have with the officers and enlisted men and women of the Coast Guard.

I am looking to you to be the rudder as you head into the unknown waters of the new Department of Homeland Security.

While you are working for Secretary Ridge, take note of those around you who might need a steady hand. Of all of the members of the Coast Guard, you know what change really means.

It means helping the enlisted crew with less experience get through the trying times with positive lessons learned. And it means helping your senior leadership attain the goals they have set.

And let me give you Chiefs some good news: Your new boss served in the U.S. Army as an infantry staff sergeant in Vietnam. He is a decorated combat veteran. He will understand your challenges and knows your role.

**The Honorable Norman Y. Mineta**  
Secretary of Transportation  
Farewell to The U.S. Coast Guard  
Washington, DC  
February 25, 2003