

FEDERATION CLASS DREADNOUGHT



The ascendance of Kristof Blaque to the UFP presidency and the end of the Four Years War in 2250 brought an end to a period of tumult and ushered in what would later become known as a 'Golden Age' of unprecedented exploration and territorial expansion activity. For all the hope and optimism that was espoused, this euphemistically-named period also saw the birth of a dark undercurrent. A pattern of over escalation triggered by the Klingons gave rise to a decades-long arms race which saw Starfleet and the Imperial Klingon Defense Forces introduces ever larger, more powerful starships capable of inflicting progressively greater levels of damage and destruction. Firing the first salvo with their *B-1/Jul'Kar* class in 2233, Starfleet responded with the *Federation* class in 2251.

As the Federation President, Blaque was somewhat removed from actual policy making and day-to-day operations, but served as Chief of Starfleet Operations for 5 years before retiring as a Rear Admiral in 2245 prior to the outbreak of war. He was acutely aware of the fleet's weaknesses in several areas--including offense/defense and logistics--and watched with grim amusement as the ancient *Yorktown* class was refitted and utilized to keep the Klingons at bay.

Of more concern to him was the Qasr administration's reticence to stand up to the impotent and wholly ineffective cadre of admirals at the top of Starfleet's leadership structure. It was their bureaucratic bickering and indecisiveness that had hamstrung the fleet for decades and kept the ASDB off-balance. Others even speculated that the Class I era might've come about earlier had this not been an issue.

Nonetheless, upon taking office, his first move was to gut the entire leadership structure--dismissing or otherwise forcing into retirement every senior admiral except one, Rear Admiral Paula Christenson. The admiralty's newest member and the only woman,

Blaque promoted her 3 grades to Star Admiral and charged the new Commander-in-Chief of the Federation Starfleet with not only rebuilding the admiralty, but carrying out two of his signature campaign pledges: to build up defenses (to prevent another open conflict) and support efforts to expand Federation territory.

Achieving the first was vital to achieving the second. Without a solid and robust defense and a credible deterrent, everything from colonial transports to construction ships and freighters would be at risk from all manner of threats, not the least of which were major threat forces like the IKDF. Christenson was a primary planner involved in the new layered defense strategy which depended in part on smaller classes like *Seawolf* and *Burke* that were entering service. What the strategy lacked was a true replacement for *Yorktown*, an offensive weapon of unassailable power capable of engaging and defeating all challengers, including the Klingon *B-1*.

Briefly considered was *Project: Ares*, a top-secret Battlecruiser design conceived just prior to the introduction of the *Kiaga* class. Heavily armed, moreso than anything Starfleet had in service, the relatively exotic design of the power distribution and warp propulsion systems proved vulnerable, so much so, that a significant time investment would be required to either complete a total redesign or devise better protection.

With circumferential warp engine design having reached its apex with the introduction of the *PB-47* (units that would not filter out to lesser classes until the latter half of the decade at the earliest), the decision was made to revisit the ill-fated *Tritium* project of the 2190s and make another attempt at building a multi-nacelle starship. Unlike *Yorktown*, this new starship would feature no scientific or exploratory accretions, the design instead being optimized for sustained high speed maneuvering and the employment of heavy offensive firepower.

Codenamed *Federation*, development began in 2250. Rather than attempt to create an exotic design from scratch as had been done with *Tritium*, the ASDB strove to stick to Class I conventions and 'integrate' the design as much as possible with the rest of the fleet. To that end, they started with the same basic design of the *Constitution* class and then went from there.

One of the biggest changes came with the primary hull. 140 meters in diameter, it had twice the volume of the now fleet-standard saucer that was used on *Constitution* and almost every other major class in the fleet. 14 decks thick, it was topped off by a larger bridge module. For the most part, the bridge itself received only cosmetic changes (in lighting, color scheme etc). Of substance, were completely new multifunction overhead displays both port and starboard along with secondary control consoles built into the aft railings surrounding the center seat. The displays and interface systems were likewise upgraded in the communications control and combat information centers on deck 2 and much-enlarged torpedo magazines flanked the launch tubes in the torpedo bay on deck 3.

Rated for a compliment of 500, accommodations weren't up to the standards of *Constitution* or *Pyotr Velikiy*, but neither did they approach the spartan standards of Klingon vessels. A comprehensive medical bay, spacious galley and separate officer and crew lounges were included, but other niceties like an arboretum, chapel and gymnasium were not.

Aside from these changes, perhaps the other biggest one was the expansion of the impulse deck and its transformation into the primary engineering control center. Advanced simulations run by the ASDB showed that the *PB-47* was the first modern engine nacelle to generate a warp field malleable enough for multi-nacelle experimentation. Naturally then, *Federation* featured three nacelles instead of the traditional two. The third was positioned just forward of the impulse deck. Relatively compact for a vessel of this size and purpose, the engineering section layout was nearly identical to that found on the *Saladin* class, save for the power taps and plasma conduits that ran down through the connecting dorsal to the secondary hull, connecting with the other two nacelles (positioned lower, almost parallel with the hull section, instead of extending up and out).

Federation's slightly elongated secondary hull was devoted almost entirely to 3 things: small craft transport, troop transport and cargo handling/storage. With the massive clamshell doors forward, fully two-thirds of deck 19 and half of deck 20 were occupied by the hangar and associated storage bays. This expansive bay could embark up to 12 craft on the main deck and another 6 in storage below, giving it slightly greater capacity than a traditional shuttlecarrier. This was relevant because of the ship's ability to embark up to 600 fully-equipped troops (an entire Marine battalion) in barracks-style accommodations on decks 21, 22 and 23. Given the Dreadnought's offensive focus and the fact it was expected to serve on the frontier for extended durations, a large degree of self-sufficiency was expected and once again, designers did not disappoint, carving

out the majority of decks 24, 25 and 26 for cargo handling and storage (*Federation's* capacity rated at a maximum of 7,900 metric tons)

An interesting measure increasing redundancy was a secondary engineering center. Spanning two decks (19 and 20) at the aft end, it was naturally larger and better situated to monitor and control the bulk of the ship's fusion reactors (6 located in the secondary hull, 3 in the primary hull). This duplication (and in some cases, triplication) of power and associated sub-systems not only provided the ship with tremendous reserves for armament, sensors and the like, but made it incredibly resilient, much more so than *Ares*.

When it came to armament, given the enormous success of phasers in service against major threat force defenses, *Federation* was designed with a 'big gun' weapons suite at the forefront, compared to *Yorktown* which emphasized the heavy firepower of its 8 torpedo launchers. Those 'big guns' in this case were 3 Type VI phaser batteries, dorsally mounted in the saucer at forward, port and starboard locations. 2 more dual-emitter banks were included, at the ventral forward and dorsal aft locations. These were supported by 2 forward firing torpedo launchers. All weapons were tied into the much-lauded *DX-7* fire control system (a modernized, duotronic version of *Yorktown's* semi-autonomous *MX-5*) that, like phasers, had proved their worth in combat. Providing protection and battlefield endurance, *Federation's* deflector shield system had a total capacity of 649,500 terajoules, making it the most powerful system of the day.

With one of the Dreadnought's defining features being large deflector dish emplacements fore and aft, it was obvious that heavy firepower wasn't the only trick up its sleeve. Indeed, highly advanced SIGINT/ECM-ECCM systems in limited use aboard the *Hermes* class, further refined aboard *Surya* and around which the *Akula* class was designed were present here as well. With the increased power reserves and specific software programming, sensor range was increased to a maximum 5.5 light years in all directions (vs the 4.3ly of *Akula* and 3.27ly of *Constitution*). Taken together, these systems gave *Federation* superior situational awareness and provided Starfleet with a more flexible option with which they could exercise control over a given region.

Where Starfleet's new spherical/layered defense strategy called for the biggest and most powerful starships to be based in and around the core systems, these Dreadnoughts were an exception to the rule. Given their size and relative complexity, each example took nearly 2 years to build. This, plus the fleet's other shipbuilding priorities meant that despite entering service in 2253, the entire production lot of 20 wasn't completed until 2266 with *Entente* (DN 2120).

Despite their capabilities, *Federation* served mainly as a deterrent, a powerful check on any force that would seek to raid, pillage or otherwise encroach upon Federation territory. It was a valuable addition to the highly mobile early warning and surveillance network Starfleet established with the *Akula* class, but its expansive hangar space was often given over to a diverse mix of standard and heavy shuttles--Starfighter Command's introduction of the massive *Yorktown* (CV 2200) and its continued efforts to refine interoperability with more traditional assets making this capability somewhat superfluous.

In any event, the opportunity to undertake the kind of offensive/defensive operations the class was designed for came only once during 2267's so-called "Four Days War". Following the destruction of the IKS *Vortha* by the *Enterprise* (CH 1701) in orbit of Organia, it became clear that planet would become a major flashpoint. After the IKDF sent a squadron to secure the planet, the *Enterprise* was forced to flee to Starbase 212 in the nearby Aldebaran sector--the closest Federation installation.

That starbase was the home port for the 10th Perimeter Action Squadron. Under the command of Commodore Lyle Craig, Starfleet tasked him with returning to Organia and expelling or destroying the IKDF force. If augmenting his squadron with three additional Heavy Cruisers (*Excalibur*/CH 1705, *Potempkin*/CH 1711, *Farragut*/CH 1702) and a Dreadnought (*Star Union*/DN 2112) wasn't enough, Starfleet also dispatched the *Federation* (DN 2100) and *Alliance* (DN 2113).

Reaching Organia first, the latter two squared off against the B-1 class IKS *TuQ Kurit* and IKS *Nin'ToQ* in what later came to be known as the 'Clash of the Dreadnoughts'. Engaging in battle outside the system, both pairs of dreadnoughts maneuvered deftly, targeting their weapons carefully and deliberately. For the Imperial combatants, this was quite out of character, the commanders acting as if they were engaged in a game of *Klin Zha* rather than a battle against their most bitter foes. Initially, the *Alliance* was engaged by the *Nin'ToQ* who attempted to disable her propulsion systems with drone missiles and photon torpedoes. These strikes were followed in quick succession by three heavy disruptor salvos that knocked out *Alliance's* sensor array and temporarily sidelined her.

With *Alliance* out of the fight, *Federation* had the task of dealing with both her Klingon counterparts alone. Caught in a crossfire, repeated torpedo strikes breached her shields, destroyed her starboard nacelle and disabled her starboard phaser battery. *Alliance*, having been left alone, soon restored her sensor capability and jumped back into the fray, maneuvering around to *Nin'ToQ's* aft quarter and targeting her central nacelle with surgical phaser strikes. After reducing her aft shields to little more than tissue paper, photon torpedoes from *Alliance* obliterated the nacelle and punched a massive hole in *Nin'ToQ's* secondary hull, just forward of main engineering. Their sister ship being disabled and left to drift caused *TuQ Kurit* to fight even more viciously. *Alliance* and *Federation* turned the tables and caught her in a crossfire, taking out her sensors and propulsion systems before destroying her in short order and turning back to do the same to *Nin'ToQ*.

After action reports validated *Federation's* design and painted an overall decent picture vis-a-vis B-1/*Jul'Kar*, but this was not enough to satiate some in Starfleet Command. In 2268, Vice Admiral Vaughn Rittenhouse had *Star Empire* (DN 2116) pulled from active duty, reassigned her entire crew and took the vessel to the yards at Arcturus to undergo a highly classified refitting supervised by his protege, Commander Paul Burch.

The smooth, if somewhat bulky primary hull was replaced by one that was sharp and octagonal. Structurally 'superstrong', it featured extensive bracing to enhance

survivability. The PB-47 engine nacelles were replaced by experimental PB-49 units that were hoped to provide 'transwarp' capability. With upgraded phasers, 2 additional torpedo launchers, phaser-resistant 'quantobirillum' hull armor, a tri-layer deflector shield system and a custom-designed ECM/ECCM suite, *Star Empire* was transformed from a mere fleet combatant, into a first-strike weapon of irresistible and unassailable power.

Unbeknownst to Burch, this was but one part of a carefully-crafted and wide-ranging plan by Rittenhouse. Behind the scenes, the Admiral had used his influence to create a cabal of officers completely loyal to him, moving them into various positions of power and influence throughout Starfleet. After refitting the rest of the *Federations* to this new standard, Rittenhouse and his cabal would depose the UFP government led by President Lorne McLaren and take the Dreadnoughts into Klingon space, launching deep strikes that would cripple IKDF infrastructure and lay the groundwork for an all-out invasion.

Before *Star Empire's* modifications could be validated though, Burch came to this startling realization and stole the ship in 2270, assisted by a motley cadre of engineers, technicians and even academy cadets.

Rittenhouse exerted his influence over *Enterprise*, whose crew initially believed that *Star Empire* had been hijacked by 'terrorists'. Together with *Potempkin*, *Hornet*, *Lincoln* and Rittenhouse's command, *Pompeii*, they set off on a mission to track down and either regain control of or destroy the ship.

What Rittenhouse didn't count on were the interpersonal links between Burch's people and members of the *Enterprise* crew. While en route, a group led by Lieutenant Commander Piper uncovered this plot and informed the *Enterprise* senior staff. After being exposed, Rittenhouse and his force attempted to disable *Enterprise* and destroy *Star Empire*, but Piper's group had established positive control over the Dreadnought.

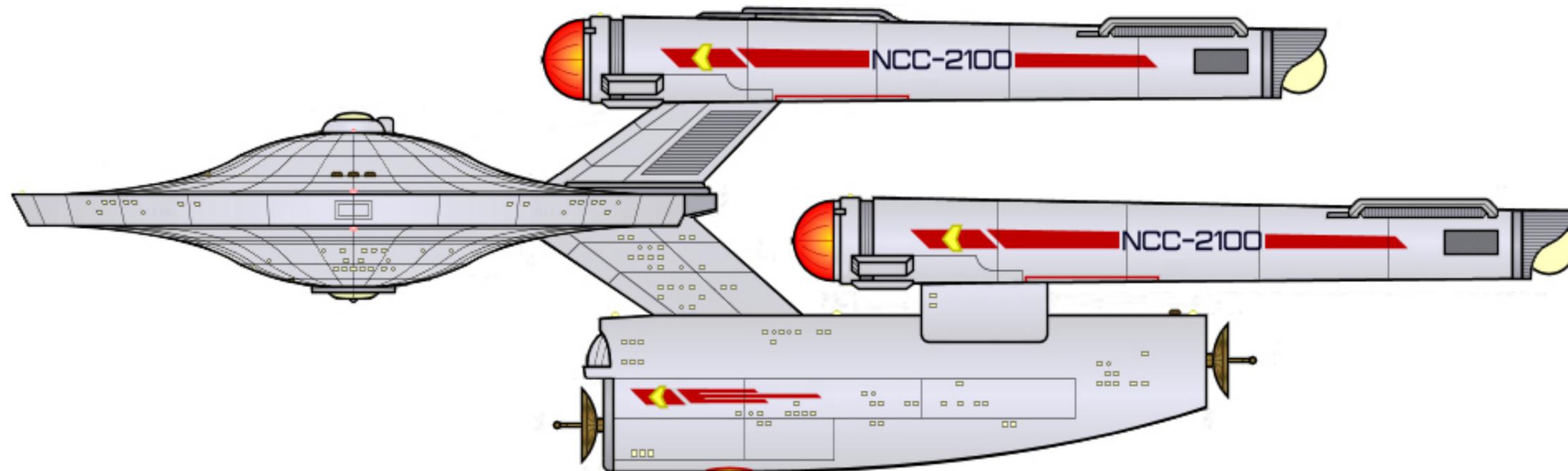
A subsequent battle saw the *Potempkin* and *Hornet* suffering moderate damage and *Lincoln* being driven off. Inexperience on the part of Burch and his team led to *Star Empire* suffering damage also, efforts of Piper and her group preventing the ship from being crippled. Rittenhouse attempted to destroy them by using *Pompeii* to make a suicide run, however he and his ship were destroyed at the last minute by *Enterprise*.

The resulting fallout had little astro-political effect, the Klingons somewhat impressed by the displayed ingenuity and amused by the ineptitude. Their overall strategy, which had continued to evolve from a focus on open to asymmetric warfare, remained unchanged. Internally however, President McLaren suffered a major blow. Coming into office, he largely continued the popular policies of his predecessors, but was comparatively more hawkish, almost to an extreme. The wide latitude he gave Starfleet Command and Starfleet Intelligence was received with much skepticism while the laizez faire attitude with which he approached their oversight was cause for worry among the more cautious members of the Federation Security Council. The emergence of the details of the Rittenhouse scandal into the public discourse also energized the long dormant pacifist bloc in the General Assembly, boosting their numbers.

Ameliorating this somewhat, McLaren promoted Heihachiro Nogura three grades from Rear Admiral to Star Admiral, with the title of *Commanding Officer, Starfleet Command* (also known as '*Commander, Starfleet*' or '*Commander-in-Chief of the Federation Starfleet*'). Succeeding Robert Comsol, Nogura successfully steered Starfleet through the worst period of *Operation Vanguard* and its aftermath. Hawkish like the President who appointed him, Nogura also brought a much-needed dose of pragmatism to the admiralty. He supported the Dreadnought program and other such construction projects, but also supported greater oversight that would avoid unduly inflaming astro-political tensions.

Nogura himself is credited with ushering in the 'Linear Warp era' and rejuvenating the fleet (beginning while he was still CO of Starbase 47), though thanks to the Cammel IV revelations, it would be some time before *Federation* received an advanced replacement. These ships therefore soldiered on in their original configuration until approximately 2274.

Though comparatively inflexible, the philosophy behind their design and the capabilities that they included would influence and come to be incorporated in an increasing number of future classes, serving as a reminder that space remained fraught with danger.



Class Federation
Classification Dreadnought

Service 2253-2274
Number Active 0

Length 320m
Beam 140m
Height 87m

Decks 26

Mass 1,035,000 metric tons

Compliment 500

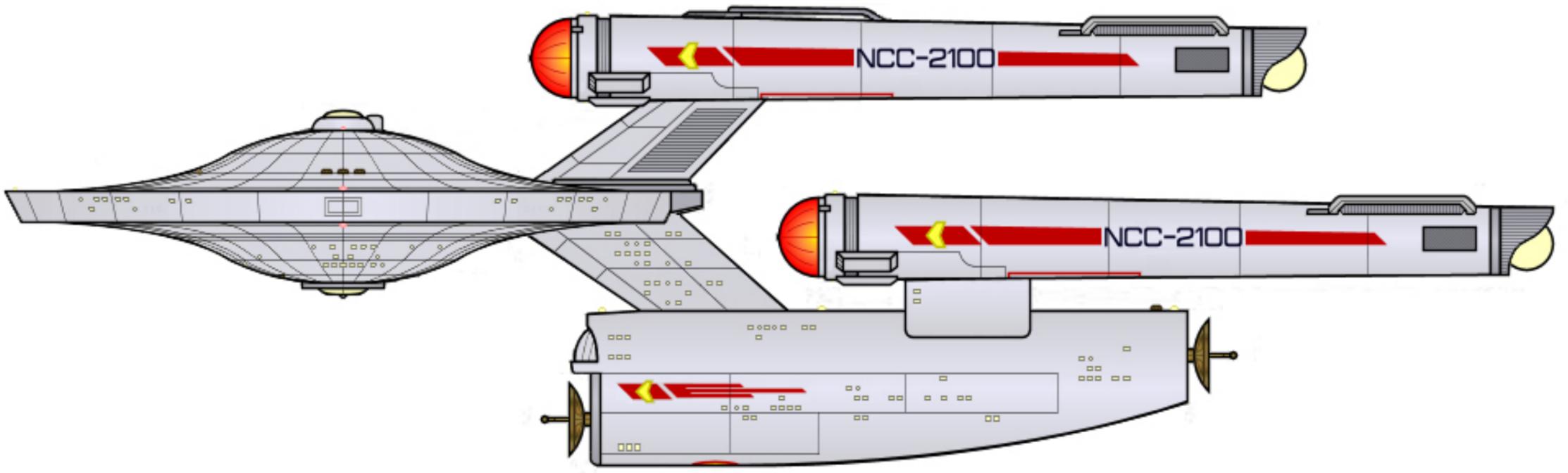
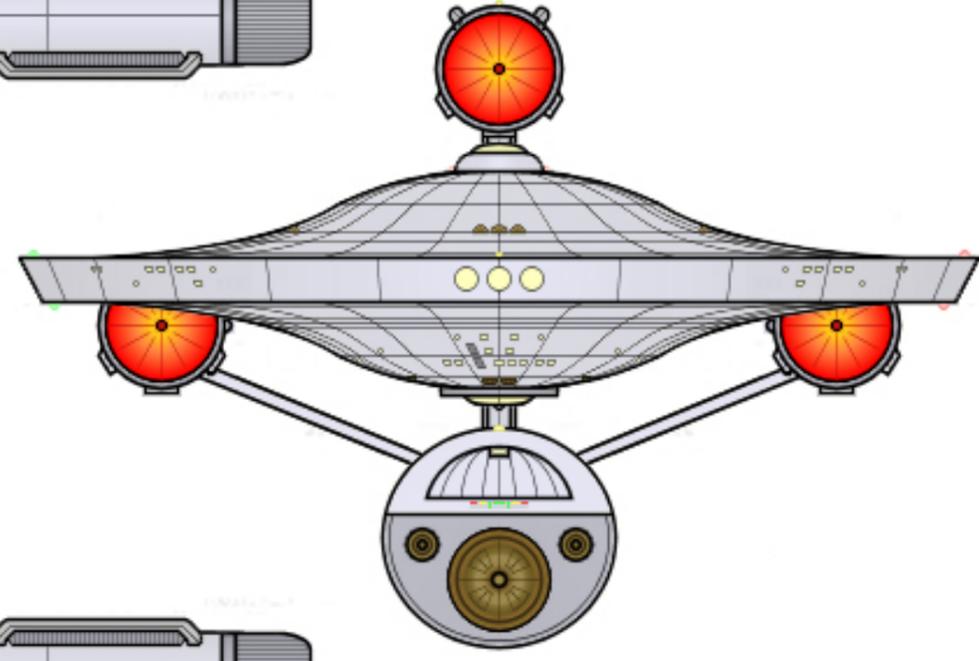
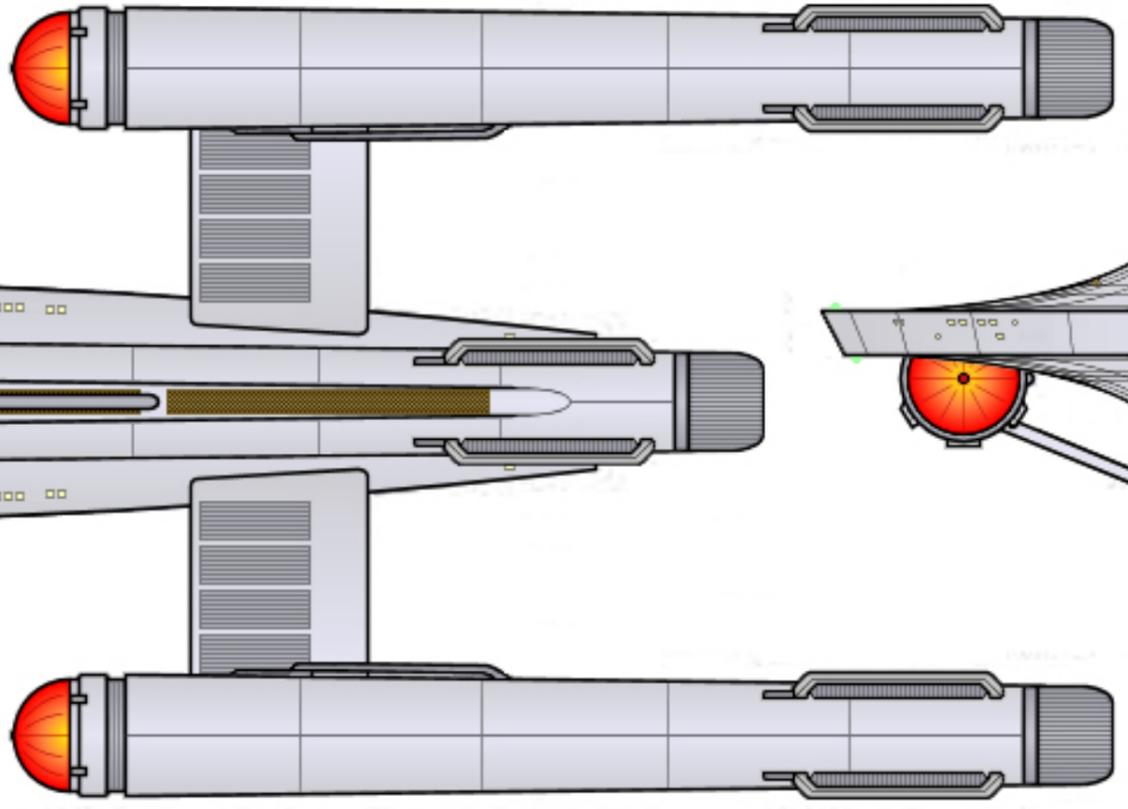
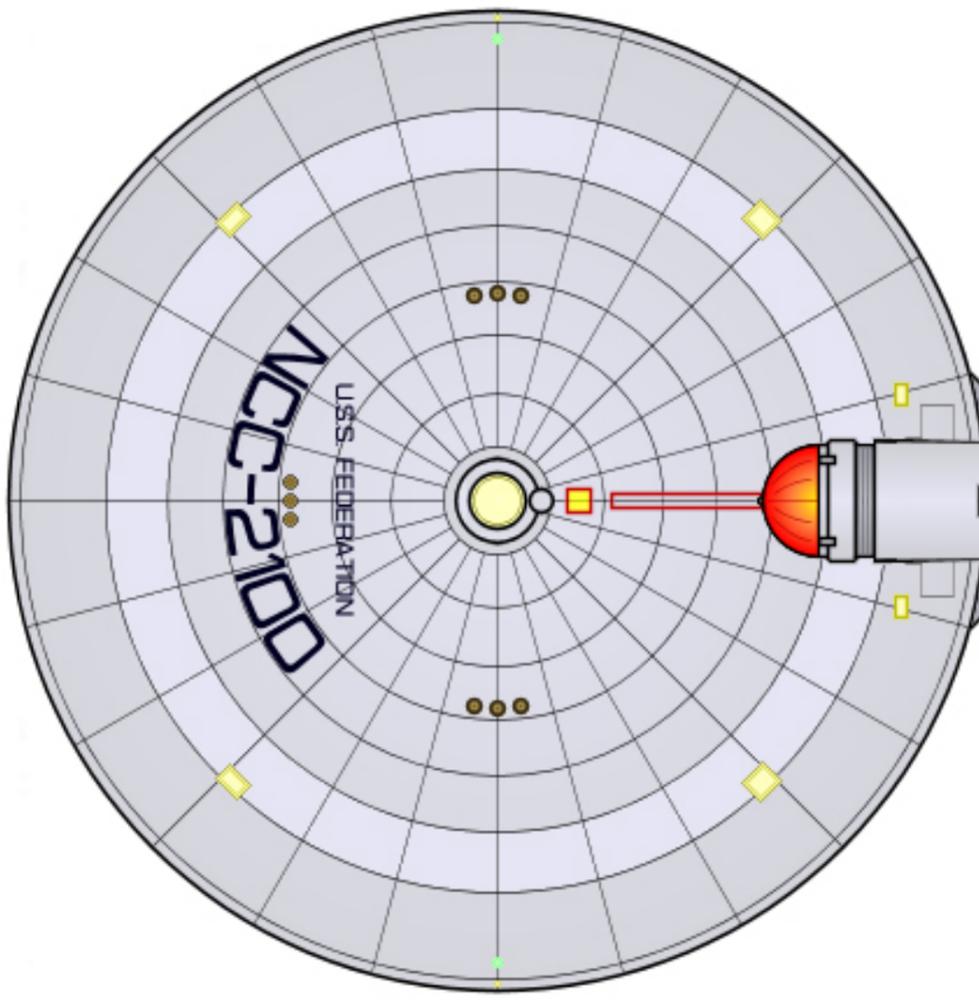
Armament

3 Type VI Phaser Batteries
 2 Type VI Phaser Banks
 2 2nd Class Torpedo Launchers

Defense Systems

High Capacity Deflector Shield System
 total capacity 649,500 terajoules

Heavy Monotanium Double Hull



Editor's Annotations

With *Federation* there really isn't a whole lot to say. Like many of the other classes I've done, it's my efforts to really 'flesh things out' that has caused this to become a drawn-out enterprise (no pun intended). Rather than just giving reasons/justification for it and then saying 'alright, it's built', I wanted to weave politics in a bit (before I finished this, I actually sat down and mapped out UFP presidents from approx. 2245 up to the early 70's). I then used that to bookend a relatively standard description of the design and service history

Bibliography

Logo—Kristian “Reverend” Trigwell ([Gallery @ Star Trek Minutiae](#))

Schematics—Neale “Vance” Davidson

Design—Franz Joseph Schnaubelt ([Memory Alpha Entry](#))