

*Remarks for the
Tribute to Sonny Montgomery
July 4, 2003*

- Recognize John Johnson / other dignitaries
 - Proud to be here with you tonight to celebrate America and a great American

- As we honor America, we cannot forget we are still a nation at war
 - America's sons and daughters have answered the same call answered by so many others
 - A call to defend our principles, our freedoms and our way of life

- On 9/11, we were knocked down – but ***we weren't knocked out***
 - We weren't looking for a fight / the fight came to us
 - America's soldiers have not backed down

- It's been said that America will remain the land of the free only so long as it is the home of the brave
 - America's bravest are fighting overseas, but this is their home
 - This is the ***home of the brave***

- Mississippi's sons and daughters are in the fight as well
 - Some of them have paid the ultimate price, giving their lives on foreign soil
 - We remember them and honor them
 - Others are still in the fight, and we pray for their safe return

- Nearly 3,000 members of the Mississippi National Guard are still on active duty
 - Over 1,000 Army Reserve members also serving
 - These citizen soldiers represent the very best we have to offer
 - Let them know how much you appreciate them

- Want to thank family members of our soldiers as well
 - They are serving here on the home front
 - That's not easy duty but they do it well

- No celebration of America's soldiers would be complete without recognizing one of the best friends a soldier could have
 - He is a decorated veteran of World War II / officer in MS National Guard
 - Respected member of Congress / serving on Veterans Affairs and Armed Services Committee
 - Author of the Montgomery G.I. Bill, helping so many of our servicemen and women earn a college education

- He is, simply, “Mr. Veteran”
 - We are proud of what he has done, and continues to do, for America’s soldiers
 - We are proud to call him our own

- What better day for a tribute to Sonny Montgomery, than the day we celebrate America
 - God bless you, Sonny