

*Remarks for the  
Northrop Grumman Christening  
June 28, 2003*

- Recognize Secretary Johnson, Rear Admiral Hamilton, Captain Johnson, Tuck
  - Also Phil Dur and Paul Robinson of Northrop Grumman
  - Special welcome to Mrs. Williams
    - Honored to welcome you to Mississippi
    - Honored to have you here as part of this special day
  
- America is strong because of men like Boatswain's (**BO**-son's) Mate First Class James Elliott Williams
  - The strength and leadership he exhibited in life is now found in the steel and power of this incredible guided missile destroyer
  - This combination of qualities will protect our principles, our freedoms, for another generation of Americans
  
- That has been the case since the founding of America
  - We stand on the shoulders of those who fought before us, who sacrificed so much so we could climb higher
  - Today, we christen a new set of shoulders for a new generation
  
- America is facing some of the most difficult challenges of its history
  - On 9/11, we were hit and hit hard, but we weren't knocked down
  - Since then, we have taken the fight to those who threaten our way of life
  
- There's one simple thing our enemies didn't take into account
  - The principles of our nation, principles of freedom and liberty, are built on the bedrock of our people
  - They're built on the men and women of our armed forces and the citizen soldiers of the Mississippi National Guard
  - They're built on people like James E. Williams
  
- With the christening of this new destroyer, that message is being reinforced
  
- As commander-in-chief of the Mississippi National Guard, I can't express enough the pride we feel knowing that our soldiers are serving their state and their nation
  - I do know this – when America needs the very best, the call is made to Mississippi
  - Whether it's the best soldiers or the best shipbuilders, they'll be found here

- The strength we find in this destroyer is tempered with the compassion we have as a nation
  - In times of war, there are those who see a hopeless end; I see an endless hope
  
- America is not just a country
  - It is an ideal, a principle
  - That principle will stand tall as long as American soldiers, soldiers like James Williams, are there to defend it
  
- May God bless this ship and those who serve on it
  - God bless Mississippi / God bless America