

Tom Schievelbein
Virginia Christening Ceremony
August 16, 2003
Remarks

THANK YOU MIKE.

MRS. ROBB, SENATOR ALLEN, DISTINGUISHED PLATFORM GUESTS, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN – IT'S MY HONOR TO BE HERE TODAY REPRESENTING THE MEN AND WOMEN OF NORTHROP GRUMMAN NEWPORT NEWS WHO ARE HELPING TO BUILD THE SUBMARINE -- *VIRGINIA*.

IT'S A GREAT DAY FOR ALL VIRGINIANS – AND FOR THE PEOPLE OF CONNECTICUT AND RHODE ISLAND – THREE STATES THAT HAVE A LOT IN COMMON.

ALL THREE BEGAN AS ONE OF AMERICA'S THIRTEEN COLONIES.

IN EACH STATE'S HISTORY --YOU'LL FIND SIMILAR STORIES OF PIONEERS, GREAT LEADERS AND TRAILBLAZERS – PEOPLE NOT AFRAID TO PUSH THE ENVELOPE OF POSSIBILITY.

PEOPLE LIKE RHODE ISLAND'S LIEUTENANT SAMUEL HOWARD – WHO PILOTED THE *USS MONITOR* IN ITS FAMOUS BATTLE AGAINST THE CONFEDERATE IRONCLAD *MERRIMACK* – A BATTLE THAT TOOK PLACE IN HAMPTON ROADS, VIRGINIA -- NOT FAR FROM THE SHIPYARD.

THEN THERE'S THE CONNECTICUT SON -- COLLIS P. HUNTINGTON – WHO BLAZED A PATH FOR A CROSS COUNTRY RAILROAD SYSTEM – AND WHO – BY THE WAY -- FOUNDED NEWPORT NEWS SHIPBUILDING IN 1886.

AND FROM VIRGINIA --THE FATHER OF OUR COUNTRY AND THE FIRST PRESIDENT AND COMMANDER IN CHIEF – GEORGE WASHINGTON.

EACH STATE ALSO HAS A LONG HISTORY WITH THE NAVY AND SUBMARINES.

WHILE CONNECTICUT LAYS RIGHTFUL CLAIM TO BUILDING THE FIRST MODERN SUBMARINES --SEA TRIALS FOR THE HOLLAND SIX -- THE FIRST SUBMARINE SOLD TO

THE U.S. NAVY – TOOK PLACE IN THE POTOMAC RIVER NEAR MOUNT VERNON,
VIRGINIA.

THE DAY WAS APRIL 11, 1900 AND IT MARKED THE OFFICIAL BIRTH DATE OF THE U.S.
NAVY'S SUBMARINE FORCE.

TODAY -- AND TOGETHER -- WE CONTINUE THAT GREAT HISTORY.

YET THIS SUBMARINE –*VIRGINIA* -- WAS MAKING HISTORY LONG BEFORE THE FIRST
PIECES OF STEEL WERE WELD TOGETHER.

BECAUSE *VIRGINIA* IS THE FIRST SHIP IN THE HISTORIC TEAMING AGREEMENT
BETWEEN GENERAL DYNAMICS ELECTRIC BOAT AND NORTHROP GRUMMAN NEWPORT
NEWS FORGED IN 1997.

AND THEY SAID IT WOULDN'T LAST...

WE BEGAN THIS TEAMING AS A FORWARD-LOOKING APPROACH TO THE CHALLENGES
OF POST-COLD WAR SHIPBUILDING.

IT WAS – WE THOUGHT – A CREATIVE WAY TO BUILD VALUE FOR THE GOVERNMENT
AND THE RESPECTIVE COMPANIES.

TODAY, I CAN SAY WITH CONFIDENCE THAT WE WERE RIGHT ON BOTH COUNTS -- THE
TEAMING HAS GONE BETTER THAN WE EVER ANTICIPATED.

THIS SUCCESS SPEAKS TO THE SKILL, COMMITMENT AND DEDICATION OF THE
ENGINEERS, DESIGNERS, AND SHIPBUILDERS AT BOTH COMPANIES.

BECAUSE SHIPBUILDING – GOOD SHIPBUILDING -- THOUGH INFUSED WITH
TECHNOLOGY – STILL DEPENDS ON PEOPLE.

IT TAKES PEOPLE WHO ARE THE BEST IN THEIR CRAFT – WHO LEARN FROM EACH
OTHER – AND WHO ARE NOT SATISFIED WITH SECOND BEST.

THESE ARE THE KIND OF PEOPLE BUILDING *VIRGINIA*.

THEY ARE THE PIONEERS AND THE TRAILBLAZERS OF THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY.

AND LIKE THEIR FOREFATHERS FROM VIRGINIA, CONNECTICUT AND RHODE ISLAND –
THEY TOO LIKE TO PUSH THE ENVELOPE OF POSSIBILITY.

THEIR WORK – WHICH YOU SEE IN FRONT OF YOU – WILL RESULT IN THE MOST
TECHNOLOGICALLY ADVANCED SHIPS TO EVER SAIL UNDER THE SEA.

THEIR WORK WILL CONTINUE A TRADITION OF EXCELLENCE IN BUILDING NUCLEAR
SUBMARINES SHARED BY BOTH COMPANIES – AND ALL THREE STATES.
FINALLY, THEIR WORK WILL HELP PROVIDE THE UNITED STATES NAVY WITH CRITICAL
PEACEKEEPING AND WARTIME CAPABILITIES IN THIS VERY UNCERTAIN WORLD.

ON BEHALF OF NORTHROP GRUMMAN NEWPORT NEWS – WE LOOK FORWARD TO
CONTINUING THIS VERY PRODUCTIVE RELATIONSHIP WITH OUR TEAMMATES AT
GENERAL DYNAMICS ELECTRIC BOAT -- AND WITH THE WORLD'S GREATEST NAVY.

THANK YOU.