

REMARKS FOR U.S.S. WEST VIRGINIA CHRISTENING

MRS. BYRD - OCTOBER 14, 1989 - GROTON, CONNECTICUT

I am honored to have been named a sponsor of the USS West Virginia and to have been a participant in today's ceremonies.

To most of you, I am known primarily as the spouse of a respected United States Senator, and that is a role that I have cherished playing for many wonderful, eventful years.

But for a moment, I want to thank you, not as a Senator's wife, but mainly as an American woman who is also a wife, a mother, and a grandmother.

I want to thank all of you who are members of the crew and command staff of the West Virginia, or who are in any way members of the Navy or of our other armed services.

I want to thank you for the sacrifices that you have made, and will make, to keep our country free and strong--for the security on which I have always been able to count as I reared my two daughters and as have watched my grandchildren grow up.

Because of you, we all enjoy the continuing privilege of living in this great nation and of sharing in the unfolding of the American Dream--which is, in truth, the real dream of every mother and grandmother who has ever lived.

Again, thank you for so richly honoring me today, and thank you for preserving for us all this matchless country...this United States...this America.