

*Remarks for the
SCLC "Drum Major for Justice" Awards Banquet
May 19, 2002*

(recognize Bob Moses, Rep. Bennie Thompson,
Rep. Maxine Waters, Rep. Jim Evans, Sen.
Alice Harden, and any other elected officials)

I am proud to be here with you tonight, and
proud of the work and the individuals we honor
tonight. I believe it is altogether proper and
fitting that while we recognize their efforts, we
remember and reflect on those who paved the
way before them.

A couple of weeks ago, I had the honor of speaking with Myrlie Evers-Williams when she donated her husband's papers to the state. We shared the words of Medgar when he said, "you can kill a man, but you can't kill an idea."

It is the idea that we must keep strong. It is the idea of justice that we must always be fighting for. It is the idea of a society that recognizes the inherent value in every individual and the role of the individual in working for justice.

It is the idea of committing ourselves and our work to moving ahead.

I try to keep that commitment every day.

The people of Mississippi need quality, high-paying jobs – and we've created more than 21,000 new jobs in the past two years.

The people of Mississippi want a good education for their children – and we're working toward that by investing in our teachers, investing in technology, and demanding accountability.

The people of Mississippi want access to quality health care – and we're making that happen by restructuring Medicaid to be more effective and efficient.

The people of Mississippi want to feel safe – and we’re focusing on giving law enforcement and emergency agencies the tools they need to respond when needed.

I want to thank those legislators here tonight for their good work in making sure we honor our commitment to the people of our state.

I just returned Friday from a business development mission to Japan. While I was there, I came across an old Japanese proverb that read, “vision without action is a daydream; action with vision is a nightmare.”

Together, we can combine our vision with action
– and the results will be like nothing we've ever
seen before.

Thank you for the opportunity to be here with
you tonight.