

*Remarks for the
Opening of Unipres
April 10, 2003*

■ Recognize Kevin Logan, Mr. Terada, Ms. Bradford, Mayor Chambers, Mr. Boyer

Just over a year ago – March 26, 2002, to be exact – we gathered here on a rainy, muddy day to officially break ground for this tremendous facility. Today, this plant is ready to supply the Nissan facility in Canton and the vehicles that will start rolling off the line next month.

Last year I spoke to how the perception of Mississippi is changing. I said that the old question of “why Mississippi?” doesn’t get asked anymore; the question now is “why not Mississippi?”

The image of Mississippi has changed. It's changed to an image of a state that is moving faster than anyone else into the 21st century, a state that is competing and leading in the global marketplace, a state that is setting new standards in education and economic development.

We're no longer a state that depends on agricultural or low-wage jobs. We're being aggressive about creating quality, high-paying jobs for our people.

We're putting our people to work in highly-skilled jobs, like these here at Unipres and at Nissan.

We're continuing to gain the attention of other companies around the world. They're coming to Mississippi because the word is out about what we can do. They know that *Site Selection* magazine ranked Mississippi as one of the Top 10 locations for new companies.

They know we are ranked as one of the top 10 states for small business survival.

They know that *Expansion Management* magazine has ranked 4 Mississippi cities in its latest survey of the 50 hottest American cities for expansion or location of facilities.

When businesses read these industry publications, they see that Mississippi has something to offer. They realize the image has changed.

And now, we've also passed the Mississippi Rural Economic Impact Authority – \$10 million to support worker training at our junior and community colleges, and to help local communities with their economic development projects.

We're looking to the future of Mississippi, and charting where we want to go. Our end goal is to build on our promise and potential, and to build a state based on good schools, good jobs and good communities.

The image of the Mississippi of 2003 is unlike anything anyone could have imagined.

It's an image of people working in highly-skilled, well-paying jobs. It's an image of children in classrooms equipped with the technology to bring the world to their desk. It's an image of global companies like Unipres doing business in the state.

It's an image we've worked hard to present, and it's an image that becomes tangible today.

Chairman Terada, President Toriumi, Mr. Boyer, Mayor Chambers – it's a great day for Unipres; it's a great day for Nissan; it's a great day for the City of Forest and the State of Mississippi.

I'm proud of the work we've done together to get to this point, and I look forward to the successes the lie ahead for us.

Thank you.