

MEMORANDUM

June 17, 2002

TO: Governor

FROM: John

RE: AP interview with John Poretto, 6/18/02

CC: Phillip

John Poretto sent over the following questions today as an outline of what he plans to ask about during tomorrow's interview:

- *In your opinion, what is the state of the economy in Mississippi at present?*
We are still dealing with a national recession that has affected all the states. The latest information from the National Governors Association and the National Association of State Budget Officers tells us the state recovery will lag anywhere from 12 to 18 months behind the national recovery.

Our efforts to build Mississippi haven't stopped. We are working to create quality, high-paying jobs for our people, and the statistics demonstrate that we've been successful in these efforts.

- *What more can you discuss about Friday's special session regarding Nissan? Are any details of the legislation available?*
It's our policy not to discuss economic development issues. However, it's no secret that we are ahead of schedule and under budget with the Nissan facility, and that has increased their confidence in Mississippi and our ability to compete in the global marketplace.
- *What is the status of Advantage Mississippi? What's been done, and what's left?*
See attached material from Sherry Vance.
- *Have you yet to meet with WorldCom executives about the company's status in Mississippi?*
A meeting with John Sidgmore is tentatively scheduled for July 22. We have been in touch with his office since he replaced Bernie Ebbers, trying to find a meeting date that works for him.
- *What's your take on the gambling industry in Mississippi after 10 years?*
Gaming has certainly changed the physical and economic landscape of Mississippi. I believe the industry has provided a much-needed economic boost in some areas, but we need to be mindful of the human toll gaming can take as well.