

**Clarion Ledger, Sunday May 25 or Tuesday, May 27 –
Governor Ronnie Musgrove**

In November, 2000, I had the privilege to announce to a standing room only crowd in the State Capitol that a new economic development project was about to create 4,000 new jobs for Mississippi. With “one vision, one future” in mind, Mississippi and Nissan formally joined forces and began an incredible business partnership.

Since that announcement, Nissan has demonstrated its confidence in Mississippi with the news that the facility, located outside Canton, would expand and create 1,300 additional jobs. Nissan’s decision to invest another \$500 million before the first vehicle was even built is a further reminder of the growing prominence of Mississippi’s workforce.

The vision Mississippi set forth in 2000 has quickly become reality. Within a few days (if published Sunday) (or "Today" if published Tuesday) the first vehicle will roll off the assembly line of the Nissan plant, and Mississippi’s role as a leader in the global marketplace will be further strengthened. People from around the world will be watching again as we reach another major milestone in our partnership with Nissan.

The impact of this plant on our state is extraordinary. Nissan’s total investment stands at over \$1.4 billion. In addition to the 5,300 new jobs that have been created, another 26,000 indirect jobs are being created by suppliers and other companies opening throughout the state. To date, employees have been hired from 73 of Mississippi’s 82 counties.

Newly employed people from around the state are training and preparing for the start of full production. There’s a sense of pride and excitement in the air at the plant. That pride and excitement will soon produce quality automobiles built by a quality workforce.

These are more than just assembly line jobs. These are jobs that require strong technical skills and attention to detail. It’s going to be Mississippians building the 400,000 cars a year that will eventually be rolling off the production line, and I’m proud of that fact. We should all be proud.

We were able to recruit Nissan to Mississippi because of bold and aggressive efforts made as part of my new Advantage Mississippi Initiative. We knew that if we wanted to compete with the best, we had to do our best. The results speak for themselves.

The story of Nissan and Mississippi is a great one, and we look forward to a long and healthy relationship.

Welcome, Nissan. We’re glad you’re here.

