

CL War Preparedness Question: Julie Goodman 03/17/03

Question: If we go to war tonight against Iraq, does it change anything in state government.

“We have a Mississippi homeland security team in place. This morning, I advised my cabinet that if the President declares war against Iraq tonight, we will have a meeting of the Mississippi Homeland Security Council tomorrow.” (or whenever it is declared – may be Thursday)

Robert Latham, Mississippi’s homeland security director, has had exercises across the state and has built a strong team to protect the people of Mississippi. We are hosting a First Responder’s conference this week with over 500 individuals from across the state and I am speaking to that group Wednesday. (Group includes police, fire, emergency management, public officials, health officials, public works, and elected officials)

As you know, Mississippi’s National Guard has been activated in large numbers. Of the total national guard activation, 6.5% are from Mississippi. 22% of Mississippi’s Guard has been mobilized. Close to 4,000 Mississippians have been called up in the National Guard or the Reserves.

Whether you are talking about protecting Mississippians here or fighting with our troops overseas, we are prepared.”

Confidential FYI – Robert has a conference call at 6:30 p.m. tonight with Ridge. Speculation that alert level is going to Orange. We will call you tonight.

LAM