

*Remarks for the
Bosnia Task Force Tribute
July 24, 2001*

Thank you, General Lipscomb. I am proud to be here tonight – proud to be here as your Commander-in-Chief, but even more proud to be here as a Mississippian and an American.

Tonight, we honor you – Mississippi soldiers called to action in a conflict thousands of miles away, but one which affects us all as human beings.

Your time in Bosnia and the work you will do there will reflect the honor and ideals that make our country great.

The mission will be like none other you have undertaken. You are going to help preserve peace and stability in a region that has not known any for years now.

The State of Mississippi has always been able to count on you. Now, countries around the world call on you for support and protection, and I have no doubt you will respond professionally and competently.

The National Guard has a unique, dual mission. In times of state emergency, I call on you to help in disaster relief, civil cooperation and protection.

At other times, as in your upcoming mission, the President can call you to active duty for contingency operations.

Make no mistake about it this, however.

You are being called to federal active duty, but you are still Mississippians and we will not forget you or the sacrifices you are making. We believe in you, and we are proud of you.

Every state and territory in America has its own National Guard forces, but you are the ones chosen for this mission. I believe that speaks volumes about the men and women of the Mississippi National Guard.

It is a credit to your professionalism, your proficiency, and the leadership of men like General Lipscomb and General Berry.

You are truly the best of the best. Good luck and godspeed.

