

Messages of the Governor

For the second time in three years Governor Beardsley went before the legislature to deliver three messages: a review of state government during the previous two years; his program for the next two years; and his budget recommendations for the biennium starting July 1, 1953. In each address he hammered hard on the general theme that Iowa must continue to live within its income and must "cut the pattern to fit our cloth."

In reviewing his second term, Governor Beardsley asserted that the state government had lived within its income despite inflation and heavy demands for additional services. In his other messages the Governor reiterated that the state could live within its income during the forthcoming biennium, and he insisted it could be done without increasing the sales or income tax or levying any new taxes. The Governor, significantly, expressed no opposition to increases in other taxes. Reporters immediately surmised that he was not opposed to increasing existing taxes such as those on gasoline, ciga-rets or beer, provided the state legislature needed additional revenue.

Governor Beardsley next asked the legislature to give serious consideration to (1) educational

television; (2) bringing the state's labor laws into conformity with the federal laws and the 1952 Republican state platform; (3) reapportioning the legislature in accordance with the constitution; (4) creating a legislative research department.

Urging these recommendations called for courage; the Governor simply could have avoided them.

The three messages are reviewed here in the sequence of their presentation.

Second Term Review

The Governor made his first appearance on the second day of the session before a joint convention of House and Senate. After congratulating "old colleagues" as well as new members on their elections, he expressed confidence that they would "maintain with distinction the high traditions of the Iowa General Assembly."

Launching into his speech, the Governor then observed that "uncontrolled inflationary forces which have run riot through our economy have, during the past two years, made the problems of government difficult, in the same proportion and in the same manner, in which the problems of the citizenry generally have been made difficult." Despite this serious obstacle, he reported that "the state government has been able to carry forward the business of the state within the bounds established for it by the Fifty-fourth General Assem-

bly," and that all problems were met "within the limits of the funds provided" so that state finances were in "sound condition" with a "balanced budget" that left untouched "the stabilizing reserve which was so wisely created by the Fifty-third General Assembly." This was a reference to the \$30,000,000 "rainy day" fund set aside in 1949.

Governor Beardsley next outlined the following specific accomplishments:

1. Various departments had made "great progress" both in quality of service and improvement in efficiency, due in several instances to the "fine and efficient" quarters provided in the newly completed state office building.

2. Services of the Department of Health and the Board of Social Welfare had been carried forward "in a satisfactory way."

3. The Tax Commission had changed its methods of operation by adding modern office equipment to improve its services to the people.

4. The General Hospital plan inaugurated six years before was meeting with continued success.

5. The Board of Education and the administrators of the institutions of higher learning had made "pronounced progress" while smaller institutions under the Board had "augmented their programs and made advancement of benefit to the citizenry."

6. Iowa elementary teachers and administrators had made "definite progress" in meeting mod-

ern educational requirements throughout the state.

7. There had been more highway construction than ever before in Iowa history.

8. The expanded Iowa Highway Patrol had helped make progress in the field of highway safety.

9. Cooperation of all law enforcement agencies enabled work in this field to attain a high level.

10. Iowa had continued "to pace the nation" in conservation work.

11. Teamwork in Council Bluffs, Dubuque, and all along the Missouri and Mississippi prevented loss of life and kept property damage at a minimum during two raging floods.

The Governor closed with an expression of confidence in the "judgment and wisdom" of the General Assembly to solve the problems coming before them and welcomed the legislators' counsel, help, and cooperation.

Inaugural Message

Two days later — on January 15 — Governor Beardsley completed his second term and started his third by taking the oath before a joint convention of the Assembly and a House chamber crowded with interested onlookers. In his message the Governor expressed "humility and sincere appreciation" upon assuming the "further responsibility" as Governor. He also expressed his gratitude to Iowans for the confidence "which

they have reposed in the leadership of my administration" and assured all citizens of his desire "to serve the best interests of all the people of Iowa to the very best of my ability."

The Governor first paid tribute to President Dwight D. Eisenhower, under whose "peerless leadership" he predicted "our nation will be able to resolve every problem which confronts us today," to the end "that free men everywhere can once more pursue the pathways of peace."

He pointed to the need for "close cooperation" between the legislative and executive departments in meeting modern problems and declared that there should be only one standard of measurement in dealing with these problems — the standard of "what is best for Iowa."

Governor Beardsley's recommendations fell into fourteen specific fields.

TAXATION, FINANCE AND BUDGET — Our policy is no deficit spending and the maintenance of sound budgetary programs. We must seek every means of continuing and expanding all essential services of government "without the necessity of any new taxes or increases in sales or income taxes."

ROADS — Despite greater gains than ever before in all phases of our road program, further acceleration of construction and improvement will require additional funds. It is sound policy for highway users to pay for highway improvements.

That very day he had sent telegrams to governors of other states where legislatures were meeting, urging them to memorialize Congress to return to the states taxes now levied against road users that were being diverted to other uses. A study completed by a special citizens' committee on toll roads for Iowa had been filed with the legislature.

EDUCATION — We must continue to provide adequate funds for productive research. Inflation has made it necessary to restore the formula for state aid to schools. Serious consideration should be given to applying for educational television channels before July 1, 1953.

MENTAL HEALTH — The professional staffs at all mental health institutions and the two children's mental schools must be expanded.

AGRICULTURE — Marketing of farm products must be facilitated. Maintenance and use of our precious resources in the soil must be restudied in the light of tremendous strides of science.

INDUSTRIAL GROWTH — We must continue to promote the growth and development of industry.

HIGHWAY SAFETY AND SAFETY EDUCATION — Every step to advance safety's cause, including the establishment of an inspection service for motor vehicles, merits serious consideration.

CONSERVATION — We must complete the program of developing watersheds which will add to the fertility and abundant production of our soil while conserving it for generations yet unborn.

LABOR — A revision of the labor laws in line with the principles set out in the Republican platform of 1952 is necessary to put them in conformity with federal labor laws.

LEGISLATIVE REAPPORTIONMENT — Our constitution provides that legislative representation should be reapportioned at periodic intervals. With the 1950 census figures now available the legislature should carry out this responsibility.

REORGANIZATION — The legislature should study government reorganization in order to solve the problems of administrative efficiency.

PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION — The special citizens' committee report on the need of a state public utility commission deserves legislative study.

STATE RETIREMENT PROGRAM — The report of the committee set up to study the Old Age Survivors and Insurance Program for public employees of Iowa is before the legislature. The interests of all who have paid into the system should be conserved, and the system made financially stable.

LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH DEPARTMENT — The legislature should seriously consider creating a Legislative Research Department in order to speed up the work of future legislatures.

In conclusion, the Governor said: "We cannot measure up to the challenge of this hour unless we have targets for our tomorrows — targets based on the hard realities of today, upon a vision of bet-

ter days to come; and upon a faith that by working together we can reach those goals."

The Budget Message

The Governor appeared the third time on February 6 to deliver the all-important budget message in which he recommended the funds needed to operate the government for the two-year period beginning July 1, 1953. He repeated his Inaugural Message plea to confine government spending to funds available without increasing the sales or income taxes, or levying new taxes. The Governor declared this to be "a major responsibility" of the legislature and that "in discharging this responsibility we will be rendering the greatest service to the people of our state."

The stress of inflation made it difficult "to measure the impact of certain economic forces on the income of our state government," the Governor commented, adding hopefully that "the fiscal policies of the new administration in Washington will be conducive to stability and sound progress." Since inflationary forces were tending to soften, it was imperative that we exercise "extreme caution" during the next two years.

The Governor noted declining farm prices despite continued high costs of operations. Nevertheless, he continued, while keeping these things in mind it was essential to provide "for necessary and important functions of government as liberally as we can. . . ." This was the premise, he ex-

plained, on which he approached the difficult budget problem.

Governor Beardsley declared no capital appropriations were needed in buildings and facilities "at the seat of government," but he recommended that the legislature "carefully canvass the situation with the Board of Control, Board of Education, and Conservation Commission" to determine their needs.

The budget provided for salary increases ranging from \$300 to \$1,000 annually in 52 statutory positions, the Governor noted, and for the first time in recent Iowa history it included recommendations for amounts necessary to pay positions indicated for each department under the various salary brackets of the State Classification and Compensation plan.

In closing he said Iowa has "no colossal debt" and levies no property tax — that field having been left to local government. "It is highly desirable," he added, "that this sound and fortunate situation be maintained in the future."

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