

The Governor's Messages

"A sound budget . . . no new taxes . . . no increases in taxes . . . no deficit spending . . . pay as we go . . . adequately providing . . . for all of the programs of vital importance to the people of our state and the further development of our state. . . ."

That was the general theme running through the three messages Governor William S. Beardsley delivered to joint sessions of the 54th General Assembly as he reviewed his first term and made recommendations for legislation he thought necessary during his second.

It isn't often that an Iowa Governor takes the opportunity to make three appearances for speech-making purposes before the same legislature. Two appearances is quite common and, indeed, required for Governors succeeding themselves. Each outgoing Governor must deliver a message reviewing the affairs of state for the last two years, while each incoming Governor must deliver an inaugural address.

Governor Beardsley not only gave both of these, but he also appeared a third time to deliver his budget message. Thus did he set a precedent, for even veteran legislators could not recall when

a Governor had appeared before a single legislature three times in its first nine days. Nor could they recall when a Governor had presented his budget recommendations as early in a session. Usually it is the practice for the Governor to send his budget recommendations and an accompanying message to the legislature by messenger during the second month of the session. The message then may, or may not, be read aloud before it is reprinted in the House and Senate journals for legislators to read individually.

Governor Beardsley's reasons for presenting his budget recommendations so early were:

1. As a former legislator he knew an early presentation would enable the legislature to work immediately on the "must" legislation it contained. This, in turn, would leave free time later in the session — time usually given to appropriation bills — for more leisurely consideration of special interim study committee reports and other matters.

2. He felt a personal presentation would command more attention and carry more weight with legislators. In his own words:

Because of the importance of the budget work and appropriation bills, I have recommended that these matters be considered and disposed of early in the session. By doing so, you will also allow sufficient time for careful consideration of the municipal code study committee bills, the reorganization bills, and all other measures which you seem pertinent and essential.

Whether any one of the Governor's messages can be considered more important than either of the others is a matter for each individual citizen to decide for himself. Inasmuch as custom calls for them to fall in a certain order we'll discuss them in that order.

First Term Review

This message, delivered biennially by the outgoing Governor, reviews the record of state government for the last two years. In the event that the outgoing Governor is not succeeding himself, it sometimes is referred to as his "swan song" address. Invariably, to purloin a leaf from the book of our federal government, it is referred to as the "state of the state" or "condition of the state" address — a parallel to the President's "State of the Union" address.

Governor Beardsley delivered this message January 9, 1951, two days after the 54th convened. In it he discussed specifically the subjects of education, highways, law enforcement, conservation, administration, and human resources. All others he lumped under the heading "general." The message took on the form of an informal visit, as the Governor opened with general congratulations to the legislators for having been chosen to represent the people of Iowa. He recalled his own experiences as a House and a Senate member, saying they left him "mindful of the responsibilities and prerogatives of your office."

Then he expressed his appreciation for the work done by citizens who responded to "the call of duty" to serve their state and whose place on the payroll was on a year around basis. All of these folks, he declared, along with legislators, have contributed and are contributing to the "substantial progress" which Iowa is continuing to make "in every avenue of human endeavor."

In brief, the Governor said:

1. In the educational field opportunities have been improved through "the increased state aid to schools," with children enjoying better schools and better teaching. Moreover, under this program "the burden of educational costs has been equalized by easing of local property taxes for the upkeep of our schools."

2. Iowa has no peer in the field of highway modernization as a result of the twenty-year program enacted by the 1949 legislature. Five times as many farm-to-market roads were improved in 1949-1950 as in 1947-1948, and 25,000 more Iowa farm homes will have all-weather roads in 1951-1952. Moreover, the program calls for five times as many miles of new and modernized primary roads in 1951 as were built in 1950. The state has been on a pay-as-we-go basis since November of 1950, when the last of the primary road bonds of an earlier year were retired.

3. The law enforcement crusade carried on by Attorney General Robert L. Larson and local offi-

cers has driven syndicate gamblers from the state.

4. In the field of conservation "we are working with nature, not against nature. . . . We have a coordinated program to deal with the related problems of flood control, soil conservation, stream and lake pollution and natural recreational facilities." It is producing good results.

5. In the field of administration the work of the budget examiners, authorized by the 1949 legislature, has resulted in tremendous savings. "It is unbelievable that savings of such magnitude could be accomplished at so little expense." Iowa is operating its government on current income with a \$30,000,000 "rainy day" fund in reserve and is "at or near the top in the healthy condition of its finances."

6. In the field of human resources we have established screening centers and made other improvements at our mental hospitals. At our children's institutions and training schools "we are making tremendous strides in restoring unfortunate individuals to normal, useful places in society."

In his general remarks the Governor invited Republican and Democratic legislators alike to visit him in his office at any time "to canvass any matters of public importance." He also turned to matters of federal scope for a moment, lamenting policies which allowed our military establishment to become so impaired that "the enemy has dared to challenge our leadership." Then he called for

"honest, courageous, intelligent leadership," so that future generations "will say that in this year of 1951, we did not fail our people in a time of critical need."

Inaugural Message

Two days later — on January 11 — Governor Beardsley came before the legislature again to take the oath of office for his second term and to deliver his inaugural message. It is in this message that each incoming Governor makes recommendations for legislation he hopes will be enacted during his term.

Governor Beardsley's recommendations fell into fifteen specific fields. Here is the essence of what he said:

CIVIL DEFENSE — Special legislation is required to make secure the civilian defense of our state. Proposed methods have been worked out and are ready for transmission to the legislature.

SOLDIERS' BONUS — A total of 229,208 claims for \$84,609,126.35 has been paid. Unpaid claims total \$7,768,918.73. Authorization for payment of these due claims from unappropriated funds is recommended.

FINANCE AND BUDGETARY MATTERS — Budget recommendations will be submitted in a separate message.

EFFICIENCY IN GOVERNMENT — It can be achieved through:

1. Legislation bringing about maximum reduc-

tions in expenditures which will result in maintaining and improving service.

2. Assuring adequate compensation to "our loyal public employees."
3. Re-examining services to see that the state is performing those it is best equipped to do well, "leaving to individual citizens and other branches of government responsibilities they can best perform."
4. Study of personnel improvement.

MODERNIZING IOWA LABOR LAWS — The union shop should be legalized. Individuals should be protected against arbitrary expulsion and consequent loss of jobs. A state conciliation service should be established.

KEEPING IOWA AGRICULTURE AT PEAK EFFICIENCY — Ways and means must be found to accelerate conservation of natural resources "in this hour of crisis."

EDUCATION — A continuation of state aid to public schools in the amount of one-fourth of operation costs is necessary. Adequate support for state institutions of higher education is necessary. Appointment of a study committee to survey state educational needs to determine how they can be coordinated with programs of junior colleges, state educational institutions, and private institutions of higher education would be a step forward.

SCHOOL REORGANIZATION — The laws for reorganization should be simplified. The principle

of local self-determination must be maintained.

ANNUITY AND RETIREMENT BENEFITS FOR PUBLIC EMPLOYEES — Benefits should be increased to equal those provided for under federal social security. Casual employees should not be required to participate or should be given refunds upon leaving public employment.

LAW ENFORCEMENT — A new law is needed providing for cancellation of all business licenses where gambling equipment is found in any business establishment. The law should be changed to provide for the screening of sex criminals by competent psychiatrists before, not after, they are sentenced.

AID TO PERMANENT AND TOTALLY DISABLED — Legislation is needed to provide aid for the permanently and totally disabled on a basis similar to the aid to the blind program.

CHILD WELFARE — Ways must be found to accelerate the program of placing boys and girls from state institutions in private homes. Provision should be made for 100% support in the aid to dependent children program. The Board of Social Welfare should be granted permission to direct county attorneys to prosecute deserting parents where circumstances warrant. The uniform criminal extradition law should be strengthened as it relates to child desertion.

HIGHWAY SAFETY — The highway patrol should be increased from 160 to 250 men. The additional

cost could be met by increasing the annual charge for a driver's license from 25 to 50 cents a year. Serious consideration should be given to setting up a compulsory inspection program for motor vehicles through private, well-equipped garages throughout the state.

TAXATION — "My recommendations are: a sound budget; no new taxes; and no increases in taxes."

HIGHWAYS — No major legislation needed in view of the twenty-year program adopted by the 1949 legislature.

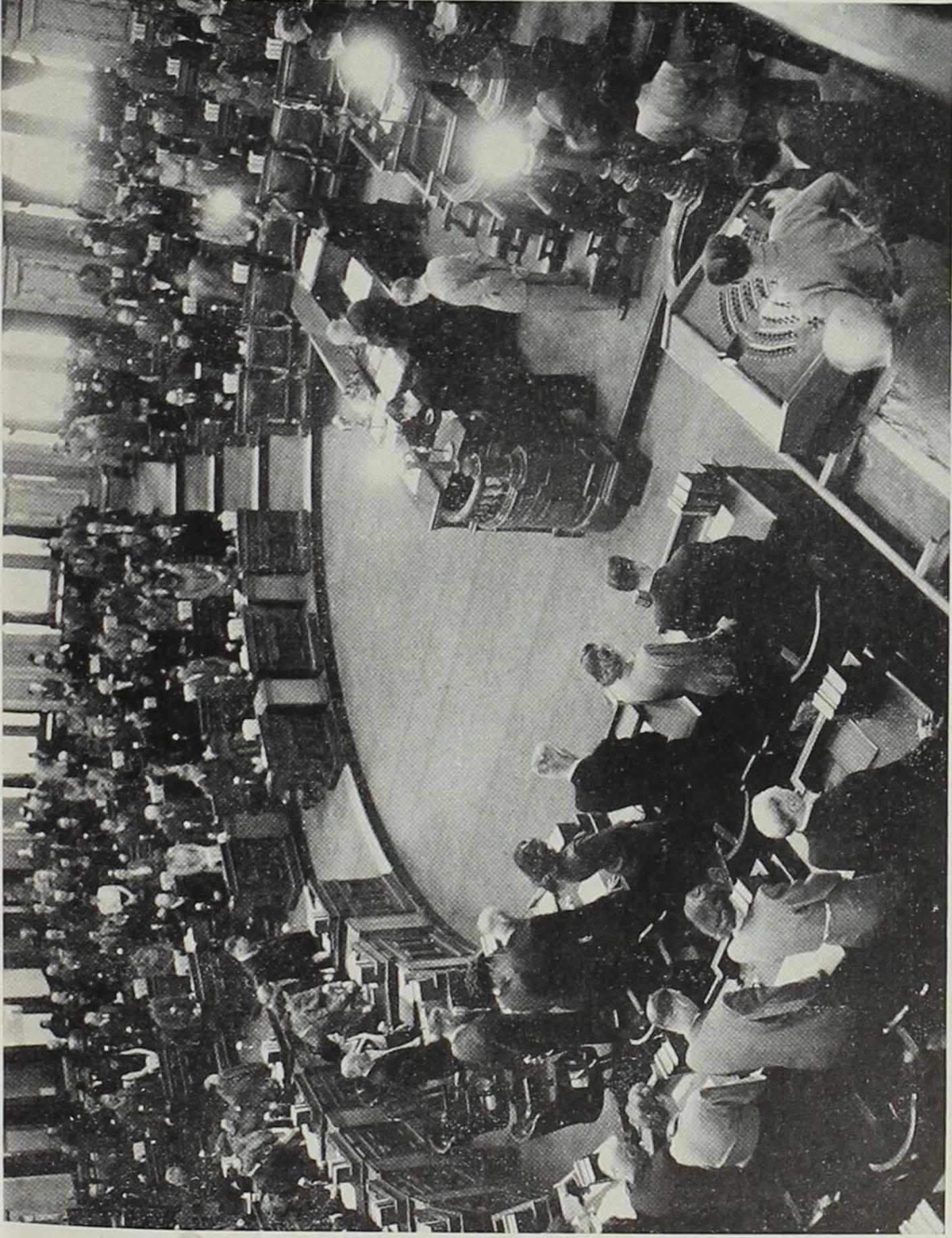
In conclusion the Governor urged: "Let us be eminently fair and just. Let us be considerate to the nth degree of the interests and welfare of all the people."

The Budget Message

On January 17 the Governor appeared for the third time before the legislature to deliver a brief message containing his 1951-1953 budget recommendations. His program called for appropriations totaling \$62,049,339 for each year of the biennium beginning July 1, 1951, for the operation of state government, as compared with \$57,395,256 appropriated for each year of the 1949-1951 biennium.

Among other things, he asked for increases in appropriations for:

1. Administrative departments from \$8,270,343.50 for each year of the 1949-1951 biennium

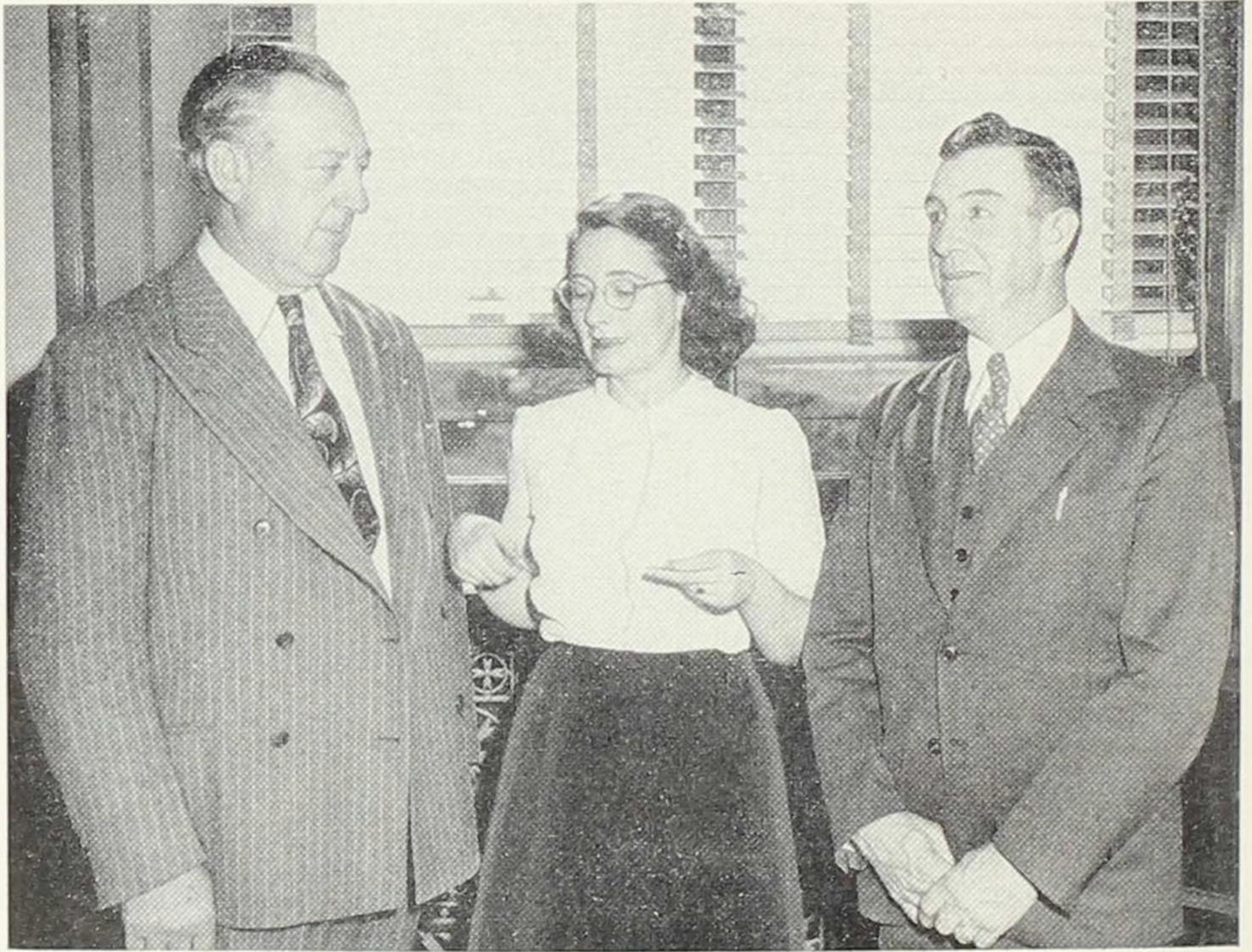


The 53rd General Assembly Opens with Prayer in 1949. Voting Machine can be seen in lower right hand corner.



HOUSE LEADERS OF 54TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Left to right: Lawrence Putney (Gladbrook), Speaker pro tempore; William S. Lynes (Waverly), Speaker of the House; Dewey E. Goode (Bloomfield), Majority Floor Leader.



A Toss of the Coin Determined Committee Chairmanship. Senator De Vere Watson (Council Bluffs) Wins Over Harry E. Weichman (Newhall), while Secretary Virginia Simpson Referees.



A House Committee at Work. *Left to right:* Dwight W. Meyer (Odebolt), John A. Walker (Williams), Lee Gallup (Libertyville), Secretary Ruth Roberts, Dr. J. C. Davis (Oelwein), Paul M. Walter (Union).

to \$8,554,321 for each year of the 1951-1953 biennium.

2. State Board of Education institutions from \$16,973,177 for each year of the 1949-1951 biennium to \$18,554,318 for each year of the 1951-1953 biennium.

3. State Board of Control institutions from \$8,654,235 for each year of the 1949-1951 biennium to \$9,368,200 for each year of the 1951-1953 biennium.

4. The State Board of Social Welfare from \$15,175,000 for each year of the 1949-1951 biennium to \$9,368,200 for each year of the 1951-1953 biennium.

The Governor made a special plea to disregard any proposal to abolish the homestead tax credit law. He also urged that no property tax be levied. For all practical purposes, he said, the state has yielded this field to local taxing bodies.

Furthermore, he declared "it would be penny-wise and pound-foolish to neglect the responsibilities of the state in its relationship to the citizens — the people of our state." He concluded:

Our institutions, our schools, all our programs of vital importance to the people of the state and the further development of our state — all of these must be adequately provided for. None must be neglected. At the same time, the cost of government must be maintained on a sound and reasonable basis — a realistic basis in fair relationship to the economic conditions which prevail.

While many legislators felt the Governor had struck the proper note for the times in his "hold the line" approach, some felt he was too conservative. In the end, this latter view prevailed in several instances, notably in the appropriations for the Board of Education, the Board of Control, and the Department of Social Welfare.

FRANK T. NYE