INAUGURAL ADDRESS

OF

GOVERNOR WILLIAM H. ADAMS

Delivered to the Twenty-sixth General Assembly of the State of Colorado

JANUARY 11, 1927

ADDRESS

Senators and Members of the House of Representatives of the Twenty-sixth General Assembly of Colorado:

Upon assuming the office of chief executive of the state, I wish first to express to the people of Colorado my sincere appreciation and gratitude for the great honor conferred upon me. I shall endeavor in every possible way to prove myself worthy of their trust.

I shall have no aim or ambition save to be of service to our state and to promote its welfare.

From my experience as a member of the legislature and from personal acquaintance with the members of the present general assembly, I am confident that the present session will be harmonious and productive of much benefit to the people of the state.

Friendly and harmonious relations among the citizens of our state are necessary if the prosperity of the state is to be promoted and maintained.

I am sure that a harmonious legislature co-operating with the governor in the interest of all the people of the state can set an excellent and welcome example and do much to secure and conserve peace and good will throughout our state. I shall do my full part to establish and maintain such friendly and harmonious relations.

TAXATION.

The people of Colorado are entitled to a lessening of their present tax burdens. The prosperity of our state is impeded by the constantly increasing taxes. In the operation of almost every governmental agency from the nation down to the county school district there is needless expense and waste.

The legislature can and should do much to curb extravagance and to reduce expenses. As governor, I propose to do my part to this end.

Proper limitations upon the various taxing bodies of the state should be enacted and enforced. Too frequently the only aim and endeavor of public officials has been to find new sources of revenue, and when found they have been resorted to to the utmost without any lessening of former taxes.

There is but one real source of taxes, and that is the people of our state, their labor, and their property. No matter how indirect the tax method, its burden falls ultimately upon the people and consumes their property and resources.

If part of the effort and energy that is now devoted to seeking new sources of public revenue were devoted to finding legiti-

mate means of reducing public expenditures, the taxpayer would have cause to rejoice.

No more than an individual can a state, a county, a city, or a school district, indulge its every inclination. That the object of an expenditure is desirable or beneficial is not alone a justification for the resultant increase in taxes. The average individual daily denies himself much that he desires but cannot afford, and so must the public taxing bodies. It is unfortunate that the pressure upon public officials is much stronger from those who favor increased expenditures than from those who wish economy, but it is the duty of the public official to resist this pressure in the interest of public good.

I therefore urge you to make special efforts to reduce state expenditures and to take steps to aid and even to compel economy in our subordinate taxing units.

After you have made the necessary provisions for the proper care of all state institutions, and departments of state, in making any other appropriations you should limit them to the very lowest amount possible and thereby give the property owners of the state some relief from an ever-increasing tax.

While there are many other matters deserving the attention of the legislature, at this time I shall call your attention to only a few which I regard as especially important. I may from time to time submit to you communications upon other matters which I deem of importance.

STATE RANGERS.

The state ranger act should be speedily repealed. It is useless, unnecessary, and a source of irritation.

LAW ENFORCEMENT.

The enforcement of prohibitory laws, as of all other laws, must be conducted with rigid impartiality and with due regard for the rights of the individual. To the proper enforcement of this and all other laws I pledge the sincere support of the executive office.

FEDERAL INTERFERENCE WITH STATE SCHOOL LANDS.

Vigorous steps should be taken to protect and defend our state school lands against the unfair and unwarranted attack being made upon our title to them by the interior department at Washington.

STATE WATER RIGHTS.

I strongly recommend the continuance of adequate appropriations for the protection and defense of our state and interstate water rights.

HIGHWAY TRANSPORTATION LINES.

I suggest that the question of a license tax on bus and regular highway transportation lines be given serious thought and consideration.

ALL FEES IN STATE TREASURY.

Legislation should be enacted requiring all moneys collected by departments and boards from fees, license or other sources to be turned into the state treasury, and prohibiting the expenditure of any moneys by any department or board for any purpose or in any amount not provided for by legislative appropriation.

Such legislation will prevent much extravagance and waste and will result in large savings to the taxpayers, besides being in accord with a sound unified financial policy for our state.

PRIMARY LAW.

I urge proper amendments to the primary law to remedy the abuses which have afflicted it, the greatest of which is permitting members of one political party to participate in the nominations of candidates of another party.

MINING.

Not many years ago mining was our principal and most prosperous industry, and we should now do everything possible to bring it back, and I strongly favor any proper legislation that will in any way help the industry.

PUBLIC HIGHWAYS.

The people of our state are entitled to good roads, which are among the state's greatest assets, and I favor a policy that will properly maintain our present system of state roads, and the construction of any actually needed new roads; but in the construction of any new roads I think first consideration should be given to the mining and agricultural districts, or what is commonly known as the rural districts, and give to the people of these producing sections suitable roads over which to reach our present main highways and move their products to market with the least expense possible; and if, after a careful and thorough investigation, it is found necessary to provide additional funds over what are now available for road purposes, I would suggest a slight increase in the gasoline tax.

FARMER AND STOCKRAISER.

Farming is among our most important industries, and the one upon which, more than any other, our entire foundation rests. Without prosperity in the rural districts, we cannot have permanent prosperity in the city, and, while I realize that all

the troubles and ills of the farmer and stockraiser cannot be cured by legislation, yet I am sure that much can be done, and especially through federal help, and I therefore recommend that you give this subject your most serious consideration and that you also urge upon the national congress the necessity of giving this great industry every possible assistance, and the relief to which it is justly entitled.

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS.

Because of the wonderful growth in the attendance at our educational institutions, it becomes necessary to provide added facilities for the proper handling of this increase, but this does not mean that we should be extravagant, or that we should not economize in every way possible. That, I am sure, can be done in many ways, at the same time maintaining the present high standard and rendering the same excellent efficiency for which these institutions have long been noted; and, where additional buildings are needed, we should construct only those that are actually necessary for educational purposes, and wait until the taxpaying public is in better shape financially before building any new gymnasiums and the like.

Our state is fortunate to have at the head of our educational institutions the high class of educators that we now have, and I am sure that every one of them will gladly co-operate with you and aid in every way in holding expenditures down to the very lowest amount possible.

RAILROAD RATES.

Although the federal government, through the power given the interstate commerce commission, has taken over virtual control of all railroads, and thereby regulates fixing of rates, leaving the individual states with but little authority, yet we should use every means possible in an effort to bring about such an adjustment as would give to our people fair and reasonable rates for the moving of the state's many products.

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS.

The preservation of industrial peace on terms agreeable and profitable both to employer and employee is of great importance to the welfare of our state. It is also appropriate that industry carry the cost of proper compensation to injured employees. Statutes for these purposes have been in force for some years in our state. Experience under these laws has disclosed some defects and deficiencies. These defects and deficiencies should be eliminated and the laws made more adequate to the purposes sought to be accomplished.

In conclusion, I wish each of you to feel free and welcome

to come to the executive office at any time and discuss any legislation or matters of state in which you are interested.

I am looking forward to a harmonious session and to pleasant personal relations with the members of the general assembly, as I am sure we are working to the same end and for the same purpose, and that is the welfare of Colorado.

Let us so steadily and loyally serve the public interest that when our terms shall end we shall be able to step from public office comforted with a sincere belief that our services have been for the best interests of our state, and that no sectional, no partisan, and no personal interest has swerved us from the full performance of our duties to our state and its people.

(Applause.)