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THE MESSAGE
of
THE
HONORABLE WALTER W. JOHNSON
GOVERNOR OF COLORADO
Delivered to the
Thirty-eighth
COLORADO LEGISLATURE
in Joint Session



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AT DENVER
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GOVERNOR WALTER W. JOHNSON

MAR 25 1951

THE MESSAGE

Delivered January 4th, 1951

Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is a distinct pleasure and honor to greet the members of the Thirty-eighth General Assembly and to talk over with you many of the problems which you shall be asked to solve. It has been my privilege to work in previous assemblies with many of you. I know that you are capable, experienced, and desirous of performing genuine service to your State. I am glad to see you back here today.

To you sitting here for the first time, I should like to extend my congratulations. Each of you has a great opportunity for service. I am confident you will earnestly discharge your responsibility with honor and merit to the citizens of this State.

I can vividly recall when I sat here for the first time as a member of the General Assembly. I was moved by a desire to eliminate bottlenecks in our State Government, to work for better legislation, and to champion all that was good and constructive with all the sincerity and vigor in my being. I hope that you too are here with those same ideals, with the same ambition, with the same hope, and with the same sincerity. I urge all of you never to deviate from this worthy purpose.

Government is a series of crises. There will never be a time when we can casually sit back and say we have no more problems. These crises differ only in a matter of degree. The ones now confronting you are part and parcel of a period of turmoil and uncertainty. Ten years ago, our State faced the economic and physical problems of all-out war; five years ago, reconstruction. Today, we cannot afford to minimize the great tasks that lie before us all. Your decision will require the best that is in you, both as individuals and as a group of thirty-five Senators and sixty-five Representatives.

The number one challenge facing us today is the increasing cost of government and the demands for more and more services. That challenge must be met by the determination as to what constitutes the essentials of government, and how economies can be introduced without impairing the efficiency or services required. This is especially essential in view of the present world crisis which will require greater sacrifices from us all.

MAR 25 1951

Right now the State of Colorado is in a splendid financial position. The State has "money in the bank," and can well stand on its own financial feet.

The Colorado State Board of Equalization at their meeting on September 18, 1950, recommended that this General Assembly appropriate a sufficient amount from general revenue to liquidate the outstanding funding bonds of 1910 with interest thereon. This will require \$436,400.00 principal and \$6,546.00 interest, or a total of \$442,946.00 as of June 1, 1951. I recommend that this action be taken to stop the payment of future interest on this debt. Since the bonds were originally issued in 1887 and 1888, a total of 120%, or \$3,000,000 in interest has been paid.

In order to effect a reduction in the number of motor vehicles operated by the State, a study has been made for the establishment of a motor car pool. I sincerely hope that this possibility will receive your earnest consideration. I am of the opinion that a substantial savings can be made through the creation of such a pool.

I also recommend the establishment of an inter-departmental mail and messenger service between the buildings in the capitol buildings group. A study has also been made on this procedure, and I am sure the small additional cost of two or three messengers will be more than offset by a savings of several thousands of dollars annually.

Another problem has developed in metropolitan Denver with respect to the office building requirements of State departments and agencies. A recent report completed for me showed that over \$120,000 annually is paid in rentals to private owners, with every indication pointing to additional rent increases. This poses a problem, particularly under existing conditions, whether or not the State of Colorado can afford to spend nearly a million dollars in eight years in rent or construct additional office facilities. A special committee of the State Planning Commission is studying this problem, and will, of course, work closely with you gentlemen on this problem.

In June, 1950, Dr. Lamoure retired from State service. As you know, Dr. Lamoure was the Director of the State Home for Mental Defectives at Ridge. Shortly after his retirement the State lost Dr. Jefferson, the Director for the Home for Mental Defectives at Grand Junction, Colorado. For the next two months the State Civil Service Commission tried desperately but unsuccessfully to fill these two positions. When it became apparent that qualified medical men could not be found who would take on these responsibilities at the prevailing wage established by the legislature, I asked my executive secretary

to meet with the Civil Service Commission to establish executive administrators for these two institutions so that the institutions could be efficiently run during the period of emergency. By employing part-time doctors this system has worked fairly well. However, it is my suggestion that at least one psychiatrist be hired at the prevailing wage for such professional services, and that he be instructed to set up a program of rehabilitation at these two institutions with adequate teachers and facilities so that a goodly percentage of these unfortunate individuals may be rehabilitated and again sent back to society.

A reduction in enrollment at these institutions through a rehabilitation program should more than pay the additional expense of the doctors and teachers.

I should like to close my remarks on this serious note. Our boys in Korea are fighting to preserve our independence. You, and the assemblies of 47 other states, are fighting to preserve our democratic way of government. Each contest is important. Each has its own objective. Each is vitally important to the preservation of our freedom.

In 1951, let us pray for lasting peace. Let us pray that no more of our boys will face enemy guns. But let us do our part to bring these prayers to fruition by doing everything within our power to support our arsenal of democracy, to back up our boys with everything they may need to bring victory to our shores.

Let us tackle "Good Government" by working harder than ever for good government. I am confident that each of you possess the will, the courage and the desire to discharge your solemn obligation to the people of this State with zeal and accomplishment seldom matched in the history of our great State.

My tenure in office as Governor was a rich experience. For that I am truly grateful.

I congratulate all of you and wish you Godspeed in the task that lies before you. Thank you.

