

State of the State
Governor Johnston Murray
January 8, 1951

TO THE HONORABLE; SENATE AND
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
TWENTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE
OF OKLAHOMA,

Mr. Lieutenant Governor,
Mr. President of the Senate,
Mr. Speaker of the House of Representatives
and Members of the Joint Session:

Pursuant to the requirements of the laws of our State, and likewise because of a profound desire to express my views concerning matters of joint interest to each of us and to all of the people of the State of Oklahoma, I have the honor to present to you this message, which will have for its purpose the suggestion of legislation needed and beneficial and likewise contain a declaration of policy expected to be adhered by me as your Governor during the next four years; being subject to change only as conditions may require or when I can perceive a better way to accomplish greater good.

In formulating this message, my primary and impelling motive has been to find and ascertain what are the needs and benefits of the greatest number of our people. I have laid aside many suggestions and ideas which had for their purpose special legislation, which, while beneficial to groups or classes, were, in the main, detrimental to the continued welfare of the whole citizenship. I conceive it my duty henceforth, in all matters, to consider myself as acting for the full citizenship of the State of Oklahoma without regard to race, class, creed, or station, or his geographic location.

You, too, occupy an identical position. Though you are selected by districts, the things you do here affect the State and its citizens as a whole, and every law passed will, to a more or less degree, affect the whole citizenship, if we keep the terms of the law general in its aspect. We should hesitate always to enact any statute that has for its purpose bringing special benefits to one geographical portion of the State, which, at the same time, inflicts a burden upon people or property in some other portion of the State who receive no particular benefits from the legislation passed.

It is my sincere and fervent hope that this Legislature will pass the least number of special acts of any legislature ever before assembled in this State. If you can do this, and adhere strictly to this principle and policy, your constituency will call you great.

Before going into specific items of ration of legislation, I desire to deal with a few subjects in a general way. Attached to this message, and as an appendix, you will find a copy of the Democratic Platform of 1950. Upon this platform most of us stood and were elected. It was a solemn declaration and pledge which we made to the citizens of

Oklahoma, that if we were elected, we would fulfill its promises. The people accepted the offer. They approved it and paid the consideration with their votes. It now becomes and is, in my judgment, a solemn compact which should be fulfilled and performed. I based my campaign upon this platform after due study and consideration, and I therefore feel that I am bound and obliged, to do all within my power to see that its promises are made performances, and I am sure that you, too, feel the weight of this obligation and that we can march together before the people of our State and tell them that we have delivered.

It has been my privilege, during recent days, in a manner much too brief to read the summary report of recommendations made by the State Legislative Council of Oklahoma during the interim since the adjournment of the Twenty-second Legislature. I have found it most interesting and comprehensive, and without undertaking to recommend or condemn specific items therein, I commend it as a whole to your very careful study and consideration. It represents much skill, labor and effort.

In my judgment, the State Legislative Council is a most beneficial instrumentality of government. It keeps in touch with the needs, demands and requirements with which each session is confronted. As a fact-finding body it can ascertain the true reasons behind and supporting such needs, requirements and demands, and is a long intelligent step toward simplifying legislative problems and making it possible for you to complete your work more efficiently and with greater dispatch. It should be strengthened, encouraged and continued.

Let us now proceed to a study of specific matters which I deem it necessary to discuss with you. It is not intended to present these matters in sequence of their importance. They are all important, and with the exception of the three which immediately follow, I would say they of equal importance, and I therefore most respectfully urge that they all be given your careful, studied, serious consideration.

THE MILITARY AND CIVIL DEFENSE

With war clouds forming on all horizons, while a distressed world hopes and prays for peace, we cannot be so impractical as to presume that peace may be attained by the asking, or without effort upon our part. As these words are spoken, and for how long hence we cannot know, this nation and all the free nations of the earth stand in the greatest peril known to their existence. We sought by diplomatic intercourse, even to the extent of turning our heads while small nations have been encircled and enslaved, to avert the condition that now confronts us, instead of satisfying or appeasing the grasping, selfish designs of the Monster which menaces us; all of the things we have done or permitted to be done seem to have whetted its appetite, and now, they brazenly seek to impoverish and enslave the world. To this yoke the necks of free men will never bend. But on the other hand we will and we must forego give and sacrifice everything and all things necessary to make us strong and keep us strong to the end that free men will love us and tyrants will fear us.

Let us therefore, here and now, make solemn compact and agreement that the safety and defense of this our nation shall be of first and primary consideration in all of our deliberations. Let us now resolve that we will subordinate all things to this purpose, and that we will limit or curtail any and all government agencies, institutions and expenses to whatever extent or degree is necessary to enable our people to carry the cruel burden of taxes that shall be impressed upon them during this national emergency.

While we prepare for the overall defense of our nation in a military way, we must remember too that a civil defense program is of equal importance. Our civil population must be protected to the end that industry, agriculture and business shall not falter, but shall carry on with the armed forces of this nation and supply them with the food, clothing, equipment, and munitions necessary to their operations. I urge upon you the immediate and pressing necessity for the passage and enactment of such laws as are requisite and necessary to plan for the civil defense. A model law has been suggested. Your immediate consideration of this act is urged. If it can be improved, well and good; if not, it should be enacted promptly; and facilities and appropriations provided that it may be put into immediate and efficient effect. In this we should not falter, for it is all too probable that the lives of many men, women and children shall be affected thereby.

ECONOMY AND TAXATION

Elsewhere in this message we will treat with the subject of the anticipated income and revenue of the State for the next two years. But let me impress this thought here. These revenues are anticipated only, and it is entirely possible under the present conditions, with large numbers of men going into the armed services and with great limitations being placed upon the buying power of the public by reason of increased national taxation, such revenues may fall far below the anticipated totals. You are likewise going to be called upon to appropriate large sums of money for the civil defense, and still more sums of money to meet the requirements for increased salaries, as is now provided by law for state officers.

Therefore, I urge you that in making appropriations for whatever purpose, you study and keep in mind the trends that may then exist, to the end that appropriations shall be kept within the income and revenues of the State as fixed by law.

In all of my campaigns for the office I now hold, and in the platform which we accepted and the people approved, there is a solemn promise to the people of Oklahoma that the State Government for the next biennium, or during the period of the national emergency, would adhere to a rule of strict and rigid economy. This promise and this agreement must be kept and obeyed. I therefore want it understood that in all of the recommendations I make for the passage of legislation and the appropriation of moneys, I have in mind recommending to you that we do these things if they can be done out of the revenues which we can reasonably anticipate will be available for such purpose during the next two years. Some of these things we may have to curtail. Some of them we may have to forego temporarily. But we must, and I am sure that with your help we will keep within our budget.

By my campaign promises and by the same platform to which I have made reference, I stand irrevocably committed to the proposition that while our nation is in peril, I shall not advocate the imposition of any new or additional taxes upon our people, and this means taxes now known or yet to be discovered. If in certain cases it may be found that tax adjustments are necessary for a more equitable distribution, of the load, I shall not object, provided the overall picture is not changed. This practice is fully justified when we stop to consider the gigantic burden which our people must bear to provide for the national defense. The magnitude and extent of that which we shall be required to do is yet unknown and unfathomed; but already we can foresee a burden that shall place a lien upon every earned dollar greater than we have ever before imagined. A tax is a tax, no matter its source, whether Federal or State, and since Federal Government must be supplied for the reasons we have discussed, the only place where the people can obtain or expect relief is from the State and its lesser subdivisions. Sacrifice if we must, or curtail if we must, suspend if we must governmental operations that are not absolutely essential, we are committed and we owe it to our people to give them every possible relief, and I feel sure that you will join me in accomplishing this most laudable desire.

THE BUDGET

At this point I desire to pause to call your attention to certain facts and figures which have been furnished me by the Budget Officer of the State of Oklahoma, and from which I have made the following compilations. Though somewhat repetitious, for the purpose of emphasis, I am inserting the full text as follows:

Since the adoption of the amendment to Section 23, Article 10 of the Constitution in 1941, which requires the State to maintain a balanced budget, we have lived within our income which is the first requirement of sound government.

This Budget is a statement of the financial program for the State of Oklahoma under existing laws and new legislation which I am recommending to the Legislature. It is an expression, in financial terms, of the actions the State Government can and should take at this time to build toward economic growth and accomplish all that is possible within the compass of our resources by the most prudent and judicious use of the money which we have to spend.

In preparing the recommended budget our task has been to allocate equitably the amount of money available to provide essential functions of government.

Requests from State agencies and departments of government, exclusive of capital outlay, total approximately \$290,000,000.00 for each year of the next biennium.

The anticipated revenue of the State under our present tax structure, based on a conservative estimate, will not exceed \$250,000,000.00 annually. This estimate is based on the assumption that the present economy of the country will not materially change during the next two years.

The law provides that in the event proposed expenditures exceed the estimate of income, the Governor shall accompany the Budget document with a proposal of new revenue raising measures sufficient to effect a balanced budget for each year in the ensuing biennium.

It will be my policy during the next two years to operate State Governmental functions under the present taxstructure. Therefore, the preparation of the budget requires that we pare down the request of \$290,000,000.00 to fit the income of \$250,000,000.00.

I am cognizant of the fact that many agencies of the State Government and its political subdivisions could use constructively more money than is suggested in the submitted Budget. Also, it would be gratifying to me to more nearly meet the requests for public funds in many fields of governmental activities.

I am committed to a program of no tax increases. We cannot therefore, in fairness recommend beyond the limits of the State's resources and the solvency of the State Treasury under existing tax laws. This view, I believe, you too will share.

The dollar figures in a State Budget have greater meaning if, after grouping related functions, we can see the actual percentages allocated, or in other words the exact number of cents that each governmental function receives out of the total State dollar.

In my general Message on the financial condition of the Highway Department I have used figures furnished me by the Budget Officer and proper allowances must therefore be made for commitments made by the Department and which have not yet reached the Budget Office. Such allowances will, of necessity, affect the figures I have given you and must be given consideration in our future program.

The following statement shows the expenditures for the present biennium compared to amounts recommended for the ensuing biennium from Legislative appropriations and dedicated funds.

**STATEMENT SHOWING ACTUAL AND ESTIMATED EXPENDITURES FOR OPERATING EXPENSES FROM
LEGISLATIVE APPROPRIATIONS AND DEDICATED FUNDS FOR THE FOLLOWING FISCAL YEARS**

FUNCTION OF GOVERNMENT

| | 1949-50 | | 1950-51 | | 1951-52 | | 1952-53 | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------|------------|----------------------|-------------|----------------------|-------------|----------------------|-------------|
| | Actual | % | Estimate | % | Estimate | % | Estimate | % |
| General Government..... | \$ 4,498,536 | 1.73 | \$ 5,990,314 | 2.36 | \$ 4,976,982 | 1.97 | \$ 6,147,957 | 2.46 |
| Education | 65,828,776 | 25.39 | 66,297,881 | 26.07 | 65,911,754 | 26.03 | 63,707,807 | 25.45 |
| Health and Medical Assistance | 3,297,723 | 1.27 | 3,804,332 | 1.49 | 4,395,861 | 1.74 | 4,581,361 | 1.83 |
| Mental Health..... | 5,369,201 | 2.07 | 5,854,224 | 2.30 | 7,277,040 | 2.87 | 7,384,040 | 2.95 |
| Public Welfare | 98,269,803 | 37.90 | 94,810,795 | 37.29 | 97,681,730 | 38.57 | 98,599,212 | 39.38 |
| Public Safety and Defense..... | 5,512,627 | 2.01 | 5,942,650 | 2.34 | 6,454,410 | 2.55 | 6,491,260 | 2.59 |
| Highways..... | 72,776,941 | 28.07 | 63,662,886 | 25.04 | 58,837,000 | 23.23 | 88,837,000 | 22.30 |
| Regulatory Services | 980,613 | .38 | 1,166,557 | .46 | 1,122,125 | .44 | 1,115,125 | .45 |
| Conservation | 3,057,702 | 1.18 | 4,149,943 | 1.63 | 3,990,484 | 1.58 | 3,913,058 | 1.56 |
| Debt Service | | | <u>2,600,000</u> | <u>1.02</u> | <u>2,600,000</u> | <u>1.02</u> | <u>2,600,000</u> | <u>1.03</u> |
| TOTAL..... | <u>\$259,294,922</u> | <u>100</u> | <u>\$254,279,582</u> | <u>100</u> | <u>\$253,247,386</u> | <u>100</u> | <u>\$250,376,820</u> | <u>100</u> |
| | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |

The Legislature makes specific appropriations from receipts accruing to the General Revenue Fund, Tax Commission Fund, Conservation Fund, and the Depletion Management and Sales Fund. All other revenues are dedicated for specific purposes, including funds received from the Federal Government under the grant-in-aid program.

An analysis of the sources of revenue to appropriated funds as shown in the following statement reveals that if we are to maintain a balanced budget for the next biennium, it is necessary to reduce the amount requested from appropriated funds to approximately \$70,000,000 each year.

Operating Budget

STATEMENT SHOWING REVENUE AVAILABLE FROM GENERAL REVENUE SOURCES AND SPECIAL FUNDS WHICH ARE APPROPRIATED BY THE STATE LEGISLATURE FOR EACH OF THE FOLLOWING FISCAL YEARS

| | 1949-50 | 1950-51 | 1951-52 | 1952-53 |
|---------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| | Actual | Estimated | Estimated | Estimated |
| General Revenue | | | | |
| Collections | \$65,107,102.52 | \$64,544,528.43 | \$65,888,550.00 | \$65,355,346.00 |
| Less Constitutional | | | | |
| Three Year Average | 54,298,410.95 | 52,884,301.95 | 58,508,339.50 | 58,508,339.50 |
| GENERAL FUND | | | | |
| SURPLUS..... | \$10,808,691.57 | \$ 11,660,226.48 | \$ 7,380,210.50 | \$ 6,847,006.50 |
| | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| General Funds | | | | |
| Equalization Bd. | | | | |
| Estimate | \$54,298,410.95 | \$52,884,301.95 | \$58,508,339.50 | \$58,508,339.50 |
| Plus Surplus Used | | | | |
| From Prior Years | 18,214,165.99 | 13,385,785.31 | 9,961,300.00 | 7,000,000.00 |
| TOTAL GENERAL | | | | |
| REVENUE | \$72,512,576.94 | \$66,270,087.26 | \$68,469,639.50 | \$65,508,339.50 |
| Special Funds | | | | |
| Revenue Appropriated | | | | |
| from Special Funds | \$ 3,154,768.79 | \$ 2,648,620.00 | \$ 2,644,120.00 | \$ 2,644,120.00 |
| TOTAL APPROPRI- | | | | |
| ATED FUNDS | \$75,667,345.73 | \$68,918,707.26 | 71,113,759.50 | 68,152,459.50 |
| Less Capital Outlay | 580,000.00 | 536,319.95 | | |
| REVENUE AVAILABLE FOR | | | | |
| OPERATING BUDGET | \$75,087,345.73 | \$68,382,387.31 | \$71,113,759.50 | \$68,152,459.50 |
| Less Operating Budget | 75,041,587.78 | 68,382,387.31 | 70,967,628.19 | 68,053,000.68 |
| UNAPPROPRIATED | | | | |
| SURPLUS | \$ 45,757.95 | \$ | \$ 146,131.31 | \$ 99,458.82 |

I hereby recommend to the Legislature the following Budget for the several governmental functions for each year of the ensuing biennium which is within the estimated receipts from present tax sources and the surplus which will be available for appropriation.

Operating Budget

SUMMARY STATEMENT SHOWING AMOUNTS APPROPRIATED FROM GENERAL REVENUE RECEIPTS, SURPLUS AND SPECIAL FUNDS FOR EACH YEAR OF THE CURRENT BIENNIUM COMPARED TO AMOUNTS RECOMMENDED FOR THE ENSUING BIENNIUM.

| | 1949-50 Actual | 1950-51 Estimated | 1951-52 Estimated | 1952-53 Estimated |
|---------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| General Government | \$ 6,552,999.79 | \$ 4,198,377.31 | \$ 6,664,935.00 | \$ 4,273,135.00 |
| Education | 43,480,495.99 | 39,238,980.00 | 42,429,311.94 | 40,392,365.00 |
| Public Health and | | | | |
| Medical Assistance..... | 1,629,235.00 | 1,693,235.00 | 2,006,985.00 | 2,022,485.00 |
| Mental Health | 5,618,625.00 | 5,618,625.00 | 7,002,500.00 | 7,159,500.00 |
| Public Welfare..... | 3,895,570.00 | 3,884,100.00 | 5,191,478.76 | 6,376,950.68 |
| Public Safety and Defense | 4,799,225.00 | 4,929,485.00 | 5,425,580.49 | 5,614,580.00 |
| Highway Commission..... | 6,600,000.00 | 6,600,000.00 | | |
| Regulatory Services | 955,175.00 | 955,175.00 | 956,575.00 | 949,575.00 |
| Conservation..... | 1,490,262.00 | 1,264,410.00 | 1,290,262.00 | 1,264,410.00 |
| Miscellaneous..... | 20,000.00 | | | |
| TOTAL | \$75,041,587.78 | \$68,382,387.31 | \$70,967,628.19 | \$68,053,000.68 |

In preparing this Budget it was our objective to maintain State agency programs at approximately the present level of expenditure. During the next two years it seems advisable for State Governments to curtail the expansion of agency programs since the Federal Government will be increasing the Federal Budget to provide for national defense. The recommended Budget, therefore, provides for only those increases which have already been authorized by law, or which are necessary because of the institutional building program.

General government includes the expenditures for the Legislature, the Executive Department and the Courts and has been increased \$187,000.00 for the next biennium. Most of this increase was necessitated by the increase in the salaries of elected State Officials and the Courts of the State.

The mental hospitals were increased \$2,925,000.00 to provide an annual increase of approximately \$1,450,000.00 to staff the new buildings which are now under construction and to provide badly needed technical personnel, consisting mainly of physicians, graduate nurses and therapists.

Public Welfare was increased \$3,789,000.00 for the biennium. \$2,215,000.00 of this increase is reflected in the amount provided for the Teachers Retirement System. As of June 30, 1950, the State funds needed to match contributions of members of the Teachers Retirement System on an actuarial basis during the next biennium, the State would be required to appropriate \$5,981,000.00. The amount recommended would provide for matching of teachers contributions for the next biennium and provide funds for prior service on the basis of the amount needed to make actual retirement payments.

Social Security for State employees will require an appropriation of \$300,000.00 annually, plus an appropriation for the last half of the present fiscal year. Therefore,

\$750,000.00 was recommended for the 2 1/2 year period, the last session of the Legislature passed the enabling legislation for social security for State employees and the Eighty-First Congress made it possible for the states to participate in this program. The contract between the State and Federal Government was effective January 1, 1951, and it is, therefore, necessary for the State to contribute 1 1/2 percent of the total earnings of State employees covered under the Social Security Program.

The balance of the increase for Public Welfare is in the General Relief Division of the Welfare Board. The Eighty-First Congress provided for Federal aid reflected for totally disabled persons under the Social Security Act, and although this program will likely be transferred to the Department of Public Welfare, it is estimated that over 5000 persons will still need general relief assistance. The present average monthly payment to these individuals is \$13.39. The recommended Budget raises the average monthly payment to \$19.94, which is the amount the State contributes to the average old-age recipient.

The Legislature should carefully consider the assistance which may be provided to the totally disabled of the State under the recent amendments to the Social Security Law. The State agency which administers this program must employ its personnel under a merit system if the State is to receive Federal makes a total of \$74,014,000.00 avail-aid. Therefore, if the program is adopted able for administration, maintenance by the Legislature, the recipients which and construction on the State high- are now aided by the Welfare Board way system during the current bi- should be transferred to the Department of Public Welfare where they can participate in the Social Security Program.

The case load for this new program will not be determined until after at least one year's experience under its operation. It will be necessary to provide funds for approximately 4,600 cases and in the event the Legislature provides an amount equivalent to the average received by old-age pension recipients, the total program would require approximately \$2,500,000.00 annually. Federal funds are provided on the same basis as old-age assistance and would provide approximately \$1,500,000.00, leaving the State to provide an estimated \$1,000,000.00 annually.

Public Safety and Defense includes appropriations for the Penitentiary, Reformatory, Veterans Hospital and the Veterans Home. The last Legislature authorized a new institution at Ardmore which will require approximately \$200,000.00 annually from the State for its maintenance. The other increases are reflected in the Budget of the Veterans Hospital and the Department of Public Safety which operates under the amount of revenue received from the operators and chauffeurs licenses.

During the current biennium the Legislature appropriated \$13,000,000.00 to the State Highway Commission from General Revenue Fund Surplus to supplement an estimated \$42,000,000.00 dedicated to the State Highway Commission from the gasoline tax, making approximately \$55,000,000.00 available from State sources during the present biennium. The annual allotment from the Federal Bureau of Roads for Federal aid highway construction is \$9,507,000.00, or \$19,014,000.00 for the biennium, which when added to the amount provided from State sources makes a total of \$74,014,000.00

available for administration, maintenance and construction on the State highway system during the current biennium.

The Highway Construction and Maintenance program can be continued at almost this rate of expenditure for the balance of the current fiscal year and for each year of the next biennium by utilizing the cash which is now on hand in the State Treasury to the credit of the Highway Construction and Maintenance Fund. To show how this may be accomplished, it is necessary to make an analysis of the operation of the State Highway Department for the current fiscal year, as well as an estimate of their operations for each year of the ensuing biennium.

The following statement shows the balance on July 1, 1950, the estimated revenues from the State, plus the amount of Federal aid which could be programmed under the Federal aid highway construction act, together with a statement of the estimated amount required for administration and maintenance, including force accounts and the amount which could be contracted on the primary urban and secondary State system if contracted on projects which can be matched by Federal funds.

STATEMENT OF FUNDS AVAILABLE

| | Actual Estimate 1950-51 1952-43 | Estimate 1951-52 | |
|--------------------------------------|--|-------------------------|-----------------|
| Balance Available July 1 | \$10,500,000.00 | \$7,500,000.00 | \$4,500,000.00 |
| Revenue (State Sources | 21,000,000.00 | 21,000,000.00 | 21,000,000.00 |
| | ----- | ----- | ----- |
| Federal Aid | 31,500,000.00 | 28,500,000.00 | 25,000,000.00 |
| TOTAL AVAILABLE | 11,500,000.00 | 11,500,000.00 | 10,000,000.00 |
| | ----- | ----- | ----- |
| EXPENDITURES: | | | |
| Administration and Maintenance | \$12,500,000.00 | 12,500,000.00 | 12,500,000.00 |
| Construction | 23,000,000.00 | 23,000,000.00 | 20,000,000.00 |
| | ----- | ----- | ----- |
| TOTAL EXPENDITURES | \$35,500,000.00 | \$35,500,000.00 | \$32,500,000.00 |
| | ----- | ----- | ----- |

Capital Budget. The First Extraordinary Session of the Twenty-Second Legislature appropriated \$32,858,675.00 of the \$36,000,000.00 bond issue authorized for the construction and equipment of public buildings, by a vote of the people on September 27, 1949. These appropriations will lapse thirty months from the date they were passed (June 22, 1952). It will, therefore, be necessary for the present session of the Legislature to reenact this legislation.

Because of increased cost of labor and material since the original appropriations were passed, certain projects cannot be completed with the amount of funds provided. The Legislature should, therefore, carefully consider the original projects authorized to determine whether or not their construction is feasible under present conditions.

Requests for capital improvements filed with the Division of the Budget in the Executive Department for next biennium total \$15,522,573.00. The State of Oklahoma has never provided a building fund from which such projects could be financed. It is, therefore, suggested that any of this program adopted by the Legislature should be financed from funds obtained from a reconsideration of the building bond program of 1949.

INDUSTRIAL EXPANSION

Oklahoma in its youth and prime is bountifully blessed with raw products and natural resources. We are possessed of wonderful locations, a delightful climate, fuel and transportation facilities, and all of the things requisite to the development of great industrial centers. Our people, even many who do not necessarily agree with me politically, have, with great enthusiasm, endorsed my proposal that immediate and adequate steps be made and taken to those engaged in manufacturing and processing, inducements and assurances that in Oklahoma they will find the things most desirable for the location of their factories and plants.

I have recently made an extended tour and investigation of states throughout the southland, and I have been both amazed and impressed with the strides being made in the industrial development of the South, particularly in the states of Louisiana and Mississippi. The State of Texas is also a magnificent example during the last few years of industrial expansion and development.

Oklahoma has never been known to remain long in a secondary position, and we do not propose to overlook the advantages that await us. Among my first official acts will be to call a series of conferences with people from all walks of life and experts in the manufacturing world, to try and determine what is the most feasible plan of offering inducement to outside capital to bring them into the State of Oklahoma. The subject is of too great importance to undertake to cover in this general message at this time. You will be consulted frequently as our investigation proceeds, and when we have arrived at what we know to be the best possible solution, it will be presented to you in a separate detailed message.

In the meantime, I urge you give immediate consideration to the laws now existing in the several states which offer special inducement for the location of industry. Bear in mind that while we are providing for new industry, we owe a firm obligation to those who are already in Oklahoma. They had faith in Oklahoma. They invested money in Oklahoma. They have lived with us and have grown with us, and it shall not be our purpose to enact laws such as would be discriminatory or unfair to invested capital and vested interest. We want such interests here and now to take notice that whatever action we take will be with full consideration of their rights and full appreciation of the great things that they have done for Oklahoma.

RESURVEY OF EXISTING BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Much has been said .during recent years of the ever mounting number of agencies, boards and commissions. All of these instrumentalities are of course expensive, and we can readily perceive by a review of the kind, type and number that presently exist, that the scope of many of these agencies are overlapping and that a great saving could possibly be effected by undertaking a fair survey and appraisal with a view of effecting consolidations.

You will remember that this is a part of the Democratic Platform and I am convinced that such a movement will not only meet with public approbation, but will also effect a great saving to the State. In these times of need, we can well afford to give this subject most thoughtful consideration. I am making this recommendation without bias for or prejudice against any of the existing boards, and will full appreciation of the benefits that the State has derived from their services. A continuation of these benefits is of course desired. But, if you find that is can be done with fewer boards, and less personnel, and less expense to the State, that too is an end most desired to be attained.

Before the session is ended, and unless you have already accomplished these ends, I shall in all probability have more to say in this connection.

AGRICULTURE, SOIL CONSERVATION, AND RURAL ELECTRIFICATION

The subject suggested by the above caption is of vast and primary importance and receives, as it deserves, extended consideration in the Democratic Platform. I recommend to you the enactment of such wholesome legislation as may be found necessary for the protection and advancement of agriculture.

Much of this need is covered in the summary report of recommendations to the Twenty-third Legislature made by the State Legislative Council. Please examine these recommendations carefully. Bearing in mind that agriculture is a basic industry of Oklahoma and will continue promotion and advancement of the 4-H Groups and the

Future Farmers of America. These clubs are of such vast importance that they become a basic part of the education of those who will engage in agriculture, dairying, live stock and poultry raising in the future. Let us encourage them, advance them, and make all proper provision for their continued growth and welfare. We glow with pride when we review the honors which they have brought to Oklahoma, and we are proud of the citizenship that grows out of them.

Let us too remember that the future of Oklahoma is dependent and contingent upon the great program of soil conservation in our State. One need only to travel over this State in an airplane to see and appreciate the progress that has been made. But this progress is not sufficient and is not enough. A vast amount of work is yet to be done. It must be nurtured, encouraged and aided in every proper way; and if in your deliberation it should be found that additional legislation or facilities are required, then, of course, it will be your duty, and I am sure your pleasure, to make these provisions.

One of the finest boons to Oklahoma agriculture, stock raising and rural life has been the advent of the rural electrification program. It brings to our rural areas, not only the comforts of electrification, but the facilities to accomplish their work in a more efficient and expeditious manner. It should be our joint purpose to encourage its expansion to the end that every farm, every dairy, and every ranch in Oklahoma shall have the benefits of man's greatest invention.

OIL AND GAS

The oil and gas industry and its progressive accomplishments has been a source of great profit and great pride to the State of Oklahoma. Through years of experimentation and trial and error, our laws concerning exploration, production and conservation are among the best in the Nation. We should keep them so, with particular regard and continued effort to make possible the greatest recovery from our exhaustible sources of supply, by whatever means or scientific processes are afforded, consistent with the proper rules or regulations concerning equitable taking.

Oklahoma, as you know, was the pioneer state in oil and gas conservation, and we have set a pattern that to a large degree has been adopted by all of the oil producing states, and is in process of adoption by some states, who, while not producing oil and gas, contemplate the production thereof. This has been accomplished largely through the agency of our Interstate Oil Compact Commission, of which the State of Oklahoma is a part. The work of this Commission is educational and has accomplished magnificent results. It should be encouraged and continued. Its accomplishments more than justify its existence.

RECREATION WILD LIFE AND FISH AND GAME CONSERVATION

The possibilities of outdoor recreation and the conservation of Oklahoma fish and game is now only in its infancy. During the last few years, and particularly the preceding administration, great strides have been made in this regard. I am deeply interested that these advances be continued and enlarged. Places of relaxation are vital and essential for our own citizens. It of great importance that they be provided for the visiting public. These advantages for such visitors are two-fold: (a) It is good business

and brings much revenue to the State; (b) it forms a lasting impression in the visitor's mind and he soon may become a citizen of Oklahoma. We need and invite their presence. In one of my speeches I outpresence. In one of my speeches I outlined a twelve-point program. I reproduced it here for your consideration.

1st: State leadership in building outdoor recreation by unification of public and private enterprise. In publicizing nation-wide Oklahoma's facilities for fishing, hunting and recreation, such as boating, hiking and sight-seeing.

2nd: Co-ordination of all activities of all state agencies affecting outdoor recreation, thereby eliminating duplication of effort and conflict in jurisdiction which will mean more effective results and greater economy.

3rd: State Game and Fish Commissioner and Director who are recognized authorities on game and fish conservation.

4th: Game and Fish Department personnel selected on the basis of merit and competency rather than political potency.

5th: Prompt transformation of the sportsman's fishing and hunting license money into fish and game instead of freezing a huge surplus in the state treasury.

6th: Encourage sportsmen in every community to organize for cooperation with the state in improving fishing and hunting in their vicinity.

7th: Increase the size and number of fish in lakes and streams by providing a constant supply of proper and adequate food.

8th: Increase game through systematic improvement of habitat and restocking and enforcement of laws against out-of-season hunting and exceeding legal bag limits.

9th: Acquisition and development of public shooting areas.

10th: Protect Oklahoma's streams against all kinds of pollution.

11th: Enactment of laws granting the greatest possible freedom in fishing and hunting consistent with sound conservation of our Fish and Game.

12th: Enforcement of these with absolute fairness to all.

The land which we now call our great state of Oklahoma was once a hunter's and fisherman's paradise. They were buffalo, deer, wild turkeys, prairie chickens, quail and many other feathered and furred fowls and animals. There were branches, creeks and rivers that teemed with fish. Then came men seeking new homes. They brought their families and their household goods. They brought their axes, their plows, their guns, their traps and their dogs.

These men in bringing civilization into the wilderness, cut down the trees, burned the grass and plowed up the land and started to build. The once open meadows became furrowed fields as did the wooded area. The shade once cast by the oaks, the elm and black-jack where the animals and birds sought protection from the summer sun, was no more. In its stead came the shadows of the regular shapes of houses, railroad stations, oil tanks, and derricks and lofty skyscrapers.

The rains came and the once clear blue streams became sluggish with the mud of wasted farm land and the oil wells spurted not only black gold into the pockets and banks of civilized men, but also brought death to the inhabitants of the branches, creeks and rivers. But among these men who sought an easier life were the true sportsmen such as you men are with a love of God's out-of-doors and the little wild friends that found themselves doomed in the march of civilization.

I urgently recommend that you enact such legislation as is necessary to carry out this program and you are of course invited to submit any other legislation that will advance this great program.

EDUCATION

During the past few years great strides have been made in our state in the matter of education, both in the grades and in our institutions of higher learning. It should be, and I know it is, our purpose to maintain these advantages and improve upon them as rapidly and as much as we can, within the limits of our financial ability. And this, we shall do.

Due to the tragic and unfortunate existence of a national emergency and the man power requirements thereof, I feel that it may reasonably be anticipated that the scholastic attendance in our institutions of higher learning will be very much depleted during this interval in our national state progress. Without intending to curtail, or limit, the progress of our colleges and universities, it may be possible, and prudence may require, that, for the time being, we confine ourselves to undertaking to maintain the standards which we now have, and providing only for such expansion and improvements as can be done without imposing too great a financial strain upon the state's revenues. The necessity for this program, although regretted, is readily apparent. I do recommend, however, that we give careful and conscientious attention to the requests and budgets set up for these institutions by the proper authorities.

Our common schools, too, have made great progress, and have attained a standing on a national scale not previously enjoyed. We, of course, desire to maintain and increase this standard; believing, hoping and aspiring, in due course of time, to attain a national standard such as is not excelled in the nation. We have provided for teachers' retirements. Teachers' salaries have been increased somewhat, and great strides have been made in the furnishing of free text books. This program should be continued and strengthened, until the full attainment of its ends shall have been made. A basic common school and high school education is of vital importance to the future citizen, one that he cannot afford to be without, and one upon which his future educational development depends. This thought should be uppermost in our minds in the division and distribution of the money which we shall have available for educational purposes.

LABOR – WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION

Oklahoma Governors and Oklahoma Legislatures have, for many years been mindful of the needs and problems of labor. This is true to the extent that the laws of the State of Oklahoma for the safety and protection of labor are among the best in the nation. I direct your attention, to that portion of the Democratic Platform which expresses the party view in relation to labor and laboring people. It, also, expresses my views. It shall be my purpose to see that labor shall, at all times, receive fair and equitable treatment; that the laboring man shall be entitled to the fruits of his toil, without discrimination or oppression. Labor has given us much to be proud of, and has paid, and is now paying, a great toll in blood and life, for the protection of this nation.

I have recommended in my speeches, and I now recommend to you, that the Workmens' Compensation Laws of this state be amended to the extent that death benefits are provided for therein, providing for \$10,000.00 death benefits, giving to the representatives or beneficiaries the right to elect whether to take under the compensation laws, or to pursue the common law remedies. An election, however, should be required, and the filing of one action should be made a bar to others.

In addition to this, I recommend the enactment of laws which will provide for permanent, total disability so that the term will be treated in its true meaning. If a man is totally and permanently disabled, his payments should extend for a life span and not for a few short weeks, months or years, as the case may be.

ROADS AND HIGHWAYS

The system and administration of the State Highway Department inaugurated by my predecessor has met with general public approbation. As you know, this question was squarely presented to the citizens of this State in the Democratic Platform, and in addition thereto, a constitutional amendment was submitted, which had for its purpose the repeal of the present system. The people approved the platform. They rejected the amendment. It will be my purpose during this administration to maintain the high standards of efficiency now attained by this Department, and to increase such efficiency to a greater degree wherever possible.

It is my firm and fixed belief that road building should be done with the aim and view of the greatest possible permanency to the end that maintenance costs may be kept at the lowest possible minimum.

The laws pertaining to the operation of this Department seem entirely adequate and no change is recommended at this time.

SOLDIER'S BONUS

As stated many times in my campaign, and in keeping with our Party's pledge, I recommend the submission of a Soldier's Bonus proposal to the people of this State, if, and provided, that there is also submitted with such proposal a detailed plan for the financing and retirement of the bonds that will of necessity have to be issued. I feel that it is our duty to give the public full information upon this subject, to the end that they

may know at the time they cast their vote, the sources from which this revenue must be raised and who is going to be required to carry the burden of the resulting taxation.

PUBLIC HEALTH, HOSPITALS AND MEDICAL RESEARCH

Public health, hospitals and medical research are of vital importance to every citizen in our State. This program has reached a high degree of efficiency and we are extremely proud of the medical research laboratory recently completed. These matters shall at all times be considered by me of primary and vital importance, and my assurance is given that they shall receive my earnest and sincere attention with a view always to the advancement and encouragement of their programs.

LAW ENFORCEMENT AND PUBLIC SAFETY

The law enforcement agencies of the State of Oklahoma are, in my judgment, adequate at this time to meet the public needs and requirements. The National Guard, used only in cases of direst emergency, is and will continue to be subject to the requirements of the national defense. Provisions for a substitute in such cases will doubtless be cared for in your legislation concerning civil defense.

The State Highway Patrol has become a very necessary and integral part of our everyday life. Their primary objective is the public safety, and to this end they will be expected to dedicate their entire effort, except in cases of emergency where their services may be otherwise required.

Having great faith and confidence in the sheriffs and police forces throughout the State, I shall expect them to carry the burden of the enforcement of the criminal laws and the apprehension of criminals. The Criminal Investigation Division of the Department of Public Safety will at all times be available and will be furnished to local law enforcement agencies upon request any time. This division is a non-uniformed secret service department and should in all cases operate as such without publicity and without fanfare.

Wherever it is believed that the local enforcement agencies are careless or derelict in the discharge of their duties, this agency will be available and will take over to see that our laws and all of them are adequately and properly enforced without favor and without discrimination.

The efforts of the Department of Public Safety to promote the safety of motorists on the public highways are most commendable and laudable. The ever present menace of drunken driving is one of their greatest problems and no punishment, in my judgment, is too severe for the man who, while intoxicated, will jeopardize the lives of himself, his family and others by undertaking to drive an automobile. Whatever you may do to prevent this menace shall meet with my hearty approbation and accord; and I hope that during the coming year we will find a tendency upon the part of our law enforcement agencies and our courts to enforce our laws in this connection relentlessly. I shall always stand squarely behind this great department in its efforts to make our roads and streets safe for humanity.

Your attention, too, is directed to the growing complaints concerning child abandonment and child support. Children raised under these unfortunate conditions must be provided for, and I recommend that our laws be strengthened to the extent that the punishment for abandonment or failure to support children shall be so severe that the practice will be abandoned.

Since the end of World War II an alarming increase has been noted in sex crimes and sex offenses. This presents a problem worthy of your most serious consideration. Its prevention is of vital interest. In many cases it is traceable to a mental condition connected with the tragic circumstances of war. In others it is downright criminal and, therefore, presents a dual problem. I recommend that a proper committee consult with eminent physicians, psychiatrists and criminologists to determine what is the best solution.

PENAL AND ELEEMOSYNARY INSTITUTIONS

The penal and eleemosynary institutions of this State have shown great improvement in recent years. More adequate facilities have been and are being provided. These institutions shall receive my special consideration and attention, and it will ever be my purpose to maintain the present standards and improve them as often and wherever it may be found possible. Fair and humane standards must be maintained for the treatment of convicts and prisoners, and it shall always be my policy to render every possible assistance for the treatment, care and comfort of the orphans, insane and afflicted.

ELECTIONS

Our experience in recent months, about which you are all well informed, has convinced me that our election laws, insofar as they pertain to recounts and contests, are wholly and completely inadequate, cumbersome and ambiguous.

I recommend to you the enactment of new laws in this regard, which will provide of course the right of recount or contest for good cause shown, and make provision for adequate judicial or quasi judicial hearings to be had in the most expeditious manner. I do not believe that it has ever been the legislative intent that a recount should be granted to suit the whim or caprice of any candidate who failed of nomination or election. Our Election Boards throughout the State have been uniformly honest, and the strongest presumption exists in favor of their determination of election results. This presumption should continue until facts are produced, which will overcome this presumption. There should be nothing left for guess work or judicial legislation.

The Initiative and Referendum preserve for the people fundamental rights which give them an opportunity to seek redress from the operation of distasteful laws, or by the processes of initiation to present laws desired. This right, of course, must be preserved and safeguarded. Many ambiguities and uncertainties exist concerning the circulation, filing, examination, protesting and hearings of petitions, and the opinions of the courts are likewise unstable and uncertain. This code should be re-examined with a view of correcting this situation and a practical, workable, uniform code enacted.

PUBLIC UTILITIES

Much of Oklahoma progress, and many of the comforts of our everyday life are directly attributable to the facilities offered by our public utilities. Oklahoma has fortunately been blessed with progressive and forward-looking firms and corporations providing these benefits, which have made an effort to keep abreast of the times.

Due to the fact that these institutions are subject to governmental control, we have provided adequate and expeditious means by which their requests for the determination and fixation of rates and regulations may be expeditiously heard. A public utility cannot adjust its own rates in accordance with the trend of economic conditions. Unusual delay is discriminatory and in many events confiscatory. The statutes and constitutional provisions governing this subject are, as I have indicated, wholly adequate, but obviously have not been given conclusive effect. I believe that a legislative declaration of policy to the effect that these provisions should be studiously and conscientiously followed by the commissions and courts would seem to be all that is necessary.

This statement and these recommendations must be construed as indicating upon my part a declaration in favor of high rates or low rates. I favor, of course, equitable rates and a fair and reasonable return upon the investment. But, I do likewise favor an adequate, speedy method of determining what is fair and what is reasonable.

PUBLIC WELFARE SOCIAL SECURITY AND OLD AGE ASSISTANCE

As you have been advised, State employees, employees of sixty-eight counties, one hundred thirty-five municipalities, and four hospitals are now the beneficiaries of the Social Security Program. It is good that this has been done, and it is hoped that ultimately all employees will be made eligible for these benefits.

Oklahoma has been kind to its aged, blind and dependent citizens. I shall expect to continue this policy to the very best of my ability, and I have entertained the hope, to which I have often given expression, that administrative economies may be attained such as will permit us to give the benefit thereof to those entitled thereto.

We cannot and will not forget nor neglect this obligation. It shall be the policy always of this administration to keep these payments at the very maximum that can be made within the revenues provided by the laws presently existing for such purpose.

PUBLIC BUILDING PROGRAM

Oklahoma recently voted \$36,000,000.00 in bonds, to be used in a public building program, with especial attention to our charitable institutions, including mental hospitals, hospitals, orphanages and the like. Much of this money remains to be spent. A great deal has been spent, and the benefits provided for the various institutions, and when this program has been consummated it is my judgment that adequate care will have been provided during the present national emergency. For this reason, no other, or further,

building program is recommended at this time. If it should be found that there are exceptions where building should be provided, or repairs made, your attention will be directed thereto, as soon as I shall have been able to ascertain the reason for the need and the nature thereof.

As I understand it will probably be necessary for you to reappropriate the unexpended portion of the \$36,000,000.00 bond issue, it shall be my immediate purpose to make a complete and thorough examination of the buildings already provided; the contracts outstanding, but not completed; and the projects contemplated, but not yet contracted for; and I shall possibly have specific recommendations to make in this regard. I am, therefore, withholding any detailed recommendations at this time, preferring to be more fully advised upon the subject before giving expression to specific views. Within a very short period I shall communicate with you further on this subject.

TAX EXEMPTIONS

The exemption of property or classes of property from the application of the tax laws is basically and economically unsound, and should be used and invoked only in cases of extreme necessity. Through the years, we have followed a tendency to exempt different classes of business or property from the application of the tax laws of Oklahoma. Most of these exemptions have been granted in times of depression and hardship. Without condemning or criticizing the motives or the results, I believe that it is now time, while we are economically solvent and prosperous that we should recapitulate and carefully study these exemptions for the purpose of determining whether or not many of them can be eliminated without hardship.

It is, therefore, my considered recommendation that this study be started immediately.

Related to this subject also is the question of appraisals or evaluation of property for tax paying purposes. Too much discretion is vested in the tax assessing authorities and this reason much discrimination exists. The intent of our laws is clear, but the results that have been accomplished under them have been most unwholesome. I recommend a study of this situation, with a view of making provision for uniform evaluation of properties and fixing standards therefor, so that all property may be fairly, justly and equitably assessed without regard to location or ownership.

A study of all laws concerning tax sales should also be made and precautions afforded to the end that property owners shall not be divested of their property except after due and sufficient notice. In plain english, the tax title racket as such should be eliminated.

COMMUNISM

Thanks be to the intelligence and high moral standards of the citizens of Oklahoma, the problem of communism and communistic thinking has not as yet been too great a menace in this our State. Its presence, however, must be admitted and by the processes of infiltration and its cunning underground methods, it is found lurking in many places.

It is contrary to every concept of decent thinking, destructive of our ideals of freedom and would, if permitted: destroy our government and substitute therefor the enslavement which now curses and renders almost helpless the lives of a great portion of this earth. .

I urge you to check all of our laws carefully in this connection to determine whether or not sufficient preventive measures are provided for; if not, they should be strengthened. There is no room for communism or communistic thought in Oklahoma. I do not favor its control; I favor its complete obliteration and elimination, and to this end I shall exert every possible effort. I know that you will do likewise.

CONGRESSIONAL REDISTRICTING

Before this session shall have ended, in all probability it will become necessary that the congressional districts of this State must be reformed. If such should happen to be the case, it will be my purpose and my recommendation to you that we meet this issue squarely and undertake the equitable and proper formation of new congressional districts. This should be done with a single motive and purpose, and that is to fairly balance the population of the respective districts and to rearrange the geographical lines thereof without fear or favor, having regard for the best interests of all the people, and without any thought to political preference or aspirations of individuals.

STATE OFFICERS AND THE JUDICIARY

A long felt need is being cared for by the changes in salaries for state officers, including judges. For many years the salaries have been so low that a sacrifice was entailed by any man who sought election to a state office. We have been fortunate indeed to have gotten as good service as has been rendered. It will be the policy of .the executive department to work in close harmony and cooperation with the various other departments of the State, believing that such is necessary and proper to procure a maximum of public service.

We are all aware of the fact that the judicial branch of our government is one of its strongest bulwarks – our defender and protector against unlawful encroachments – the interpreters of the law as written. We must, therefore, strive to keep this branch of government pure and free from all extraneous influences that might adversely affect our lives, our liberty and our property. The recent salary raises will most likely attract to this department many men of great ability who have heretofore been unable to give their time and. their services. At least that was the intention of the law, and we have no reason at this time to believe that it will not succeed. Adequate appropriations must be made to support this branch of our government. At this time, however, it is believed that our judicial branch is fully staffed and no recommendations are made for the creation of new judgeships.

COUNTY OFFICERS

Of great importance will be the coordination and cooperation of the State Administration with all of the County Officers in the State. This will be done. I believe that it will work for greater harmony and efficiency, and there are many things being done that makes such coordination and such cooperation an absolute essential.

THE NATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

It is well known to you that under our present complex system of government both the State and the Federal Government participate jointly in many activities; that the greatest good may be attained and the best results accomplished. I shall deem it my duty at all times to work with the National Administration and to cooperate in all manner proper and possible with the different federal agencies, and to support the National Administration and its agencies in the discharge of their functions and duties. To attain this end, it will be my policy to assist and support our President in every possible way and to feel free at all times to call upon our Senators and our Congressmen; and I likewise extend to them, and each of them an invitation to call upon me whenever the occasion requires.

LOBBYING

It will be my purpose to communicate with you by open message the needs and requirements of various departments under my supervision and control, and although it is not expected, permit me to say that any pernicious lobbying activities upon the part of appointees and employees will be looked upon with great disfavor. I am sure that other departments of your State Government will share this view with me, and that it will be the hope of all of us that you will be left free in your deliberations to exercise your powers and your functions unhampered and unobstructed by any other department, since the complete independence of the legislative branch of the government is most essential to the public welfare.

CONCLUSION

In concluding this message, I direct your attention to the fact that it has been somewhat general in its scope. To have prepared it in the detail that I should like would have required a great deal more time than has elapsed since the general election. I am relying to a great extent upon your experience and knowledge and particularly upon those of you have had prior legislative experience. Together, I am sure that we will meet each problem squarely and solve it beneficially. Your cooperation is earnestly solicited, and mine to you is sincerely extended.

I hope, too, that you have noted that this message contains but few recommendations for the enactment of new or additional laws. Due to the progressive spirit of Oklahoma and to the wisdom of those who have preceded me, both in my office and in legislative offices, Oklahoma has kept abreast of modern legislation and, therefore, but little legislation is needed at this time. Wherever clarifications or corrections are needed, I am sure you will make them. For the most part, the laws which we have are satisfactory.

In holding my recommendations for new legislation to a minimum, I have also had in mind the fact that the public conscience is sorely troubled with the problems of world unrest, the national emergency, plan for the defense, and the increased burden of taxation. We owe to the public, therefore, not to increase their burdens, nor require them this time to undertake to adapt themselves to the operation of any innovations not necessary or required. I am sure that you will concur in this view and that working together we can limit legislation only to that type and character necessary for the continued operation and progress of our beloved State.

I hope I may be pardoned for this further reference to your activities in the oncoming days. We are all aware of the fact that a legislative session creates a stalemate in the public life of the State. The people await the results, and this is especially true in the business life of our State, and they are therefore anxious that we, their servants, give expeditious attention to their business. There is, as you know, a growing demand, almost a clamorous demand, that legislative sessions in Oklahoma be shortened. I am not undertaking to direct your attention to specific ways by which this may be accomplished, but I know that you will cooperate to this end and that this session will not be prolonged for a single day beyond that necessary for the accomplishment of your duties.

Respectfully submitted,
JOHNSTON MURRAY
Governor of Oklahoma

Dated January 9, 1951.

About Digitizing the Governors' State of the State Addresses

Section 9, Article 6 of the Constitution of Oklahoma provides as follows:

“At every session of the Legislature, and immediately upon its organization, the Governor shall communicate by message, delivered to joint session of the two houses, upon the condition of the State; and shall recommend such matters to the Legislature as he shall judge expedient.”

From statehood in 1907 to present, the state of the state addresses of Oklahoma's Governors have been recorded in pamphlets, booklets, and Senate Journals. One could not foresee the toll that time would take on the earliest of these documents. When these items first arrived at the Oklahoma State Archives, the leather bindings had dried considerably, cracking the spines significantly. Due to the acidity in the paper, many pages have darkened with age. Some of the more brittle pamphlets crumble at the slightest touch.

Thus when we decided to digitize these materials, we faced two challenges: the safety of the original documents and ease of viewing/reading for patrons. Our primary objective was that the unique and historic qualities of the documents should be reflected in the website. However, older fonts would not digitize clearly when scanned and even using a flatbed scanner could cause the bindings to worsen. An image of each page would increase download time considerably and any hand-written remarks or crooked pages could be lost. We decided to retype each document with every period, comma, and misspelled word to maintain the integrity of the document while placing some unique images of the documents online. Patrons can download the addresses quicker and view them clearer as well as save, print, and zoom with the Adobe Acrobat Reader. We have learned much from our efforts and we hope that our patrons are better served in their research on the state of the state addresses of Oklahoma's Governors.