

Inaugural address

of

Lee E. Emerson

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## Thursday, January 4, 1951 Inaugural Address

TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND PEOPLE OF VERMONT:

As we enter upon the deliberations of this Legislature, it is well to pause and take brief account of stock so that we may know and appreciate the job which lies ahead of us. The little segment of time with which we deal will be an important link in the chain of history of our nation and our state.

The times are ominous and uncertain. The world is in turmoil. It is peopled by a vast majority who have been taught not to like us and who are jealous of our democracy and what it has been able to accomplish. To many of these people, a crust of bread or a bowl of rice is a prize to be coveted. To many of these people, Communism is attractive because they have been falsely persuaded it offers a better way of life than the misery and degradation they have heretofore lived under. Communistic leadership is utterly ruthless. It seeks to destroy democracy as a way of life just the same as the Huns and Vandals of an earlier day sought to destroy the superior civilization created by the Roman Empire. The fate of the Roman Empire, gone soft, is one of the milestones of history known to us all. Let it be said of us we are determined that history shall not repeat itself. Those who do not know and take heed of history suffer by repeating its mistakes.

But the task which lies ahead is great. We have committed ourselves wholeheartedly to the cause of peace through the medium of the United Nations. In a world today that knows only force, we are the only nation with sufficient potentiality to oppose force with force. In Korea our force has not been sufficient to put into effect a United Nations edict. It must be made sufficient. In a world grown small because of the airplane and the atomic bomb, to think that we can carry on continually seeking the good things of life first and military and home front preparedness second is to court disaster.

Neither do we know the course of attack which an aggressor may pursue against us. Victory always whets the appetite of the victor for more victories. Our reverses in Korea may build up the confidence of aggressor nations to the point where they will believe that because the United States is not ready for all out war and because there is no present adequate military set-up in Europe, now is the opportune time to finish off the democracies. On the other hand, due primarily to the fear of the atomic bomb, the aggressor may decide to play a long waiting game by letting us build up without attack a great military machine at vast expense over a period of years in the hopes that its cost will wreck the free enterprise system of government and that the American taxpayer experiencing no actual war, will cry out for relief and seek to do away with military preparedness and the garrison state. Such a policy the aggressor likewise will reason will wear down the zeal of the citizen for adequate civilian defense preparations and cause him to become indifferent to the perils he might be up against. The history of our country has shown we have been impatient that wars be quickly fought and over with so that we could forget them and return to the pursuits of peace as rapidly as possible. We do not like crisis or emergency to linger. Today, in view of our commanding world position as the leader of the democracies and the chief supporter of the United Nations, we must remain strong and alert. As long as potential aggression exists which might destroy us, we must remain fully armed, and the temper of the people on the civilian front must be one of continuous willingness to plan for our protection and be willing to implement those plans whenever necessary.

I turn, therefore, to the consideration of some of the abnormal problems the times confront us with.

### EXTRAORDINARY MEASURES

**Communism:** We here in Vermont, believe in democracy, and its most important attributes such as the right to free speech, freedom of religious worship, freedom of assemblage and a free press. However, we do not want to see this democracy imperiled by the advocacy, through the medium of any political party, of the overthrow of our government by force. Any party having such a principle as a part of its platform should be outlawed in Vermont. Furthermore, I call your attention to the fact that the United States is not technically in a state of war at the present time. Chapter 306 of the Vermont Statutes known as the Sabotage Prevention Act

comes into force and effect only when the United States is so engaged. I believe this chapter dealing with acts of sabotage in time of war should be so amended as to make it applicable under present day conditions.

**Civil Defense.** No. 251 of the Acts of 1949 sets up a civil defense agency within the Department of Public Safety. This Act provides for a council which is charged with the duty of adopting a plan contemplating the coordination to the maximum extent of all civil defense functions of the state with the comparable functions of the Federal government. The Council should be made answerable to the Governor. The Act should be clarified and enlarged to fully meet the conditions we are faced with. Plans for all kinds of disaster relief which may not have been contemplated at the time the Act was drawn, including the care of refugees who may come to our State from bombed metropolitan areas should be detailed therein. As a matter of patriotism it behooves the citizen for his own self-protection to give freely of his time and effort so that an adequate civil defense set up may cover the state. The work should be kept upon a volunteer rather than a paid basis as much as possible. We must all volunteer willingly for this work and be willing to do or perform whatever tasks may be assigned to us to accomplish. Many local civil defense set-ups are rapidly being put into effect and commendation is due for the spirit and leadership which has made this possible. An appropriation for this activity will be recommended in the budget.

**War Powers Act.** The Legislature of 1943 adopted a measure, No. 6 of the Acts of 1943, known as the "State Emergency War Powers Act of 1943." Such an act, with modifications to bring it up to present day situations, should in my opinion be re-adopted by this legislature, the act to be put into effect in the event of war between our country and any foreign nation or to be put into effect in the event of any surprise acts of aggression against our country by any foreign power before a formal declaration of war can be made. In this connection attention is called to the fact that during the last year there was a threatened strike of electric utility workers in the Newport area because of a failure of the workers and the employer utility to get together on the matter of pay. A strike by the workers of an electric utility might cause the crippling or shutting down of plant activities thereby resulting in possible grave injury to the people of the area serviced by it. The same situation might arise in connection with the operation of other utilities whose work is of a semi-public nature. It would appear as though, to meet any such possible conditions arising and disrupting our normal economy, that the governor should be implemented with power to seize and take over the property of the affected utility and provide for its temporary emergency operation until such time as the differences between management and labor could be ironed out. This grant of power could very well be useful not only in the unusual circumstances under which we live today, but as a permanent addition to our statutory law under normal conditions.

**State Guard.** In view of the fact that most of our National Guard has been activated into Federal service and other remaining National Guard units in the state have been alerted, the state will be in the position of not having adequate military forces available in the event of major disasters or emergencies confronting us. I, therefore, recommend the setting up of a State Guard substantially along the lines provided for by No. 180 of the Acts of 1941, which act first created a State Guard in this state.

**Soldiers Bonus.** Although there has been no formal declaration of war, we are at the present time engaged in armed conflict with the North Korean forces and the armies of Communist China. Vermont boys are giving their lives and their service to the cause of the United Nations on the battlefields of Korea. I recommend that members of the armed services during the period of armed conflict of war be paid a bonus the same as the veterans of World War I and World War II have been paid in this state. An appropriation to implement this recommendation is provided for in the budget.

**Aviation.** No one can gainsay the fact that aviation will play an important part in any emergency which war conditions may thrust upon us. Likewise its usefulness in aiding the development of recreational and business activity in the state has been slowly but steadily improving.

The money we have been appropriating for airport development is, under existing statutes, permitted to be used only for airport construction. Federal funds on a matching basis have been available for construction work, but not for maintenance. There is not as great a demand upon this fund for airport construction as there has been, and although the Federal government does not match money we spend for maintenance, still I feel that

the State should permit the use of some portion of this fund for such purpose because this is becoming an increasingly more pressing problem at the twenty-two airports in the state.

An equitable formula should be worked out whereby the state could render some assistance in the matter of snow removal and repairs to these airports so that they may be kept in a proper and usable state at all times.

In common with eleven other states, in 1923 Vermont adopted a statute holding the owner or pilot of an aircraft doing damage absolutely liable as the result of flight or accident. Most of the states which adopted this legislation are now doing away with it or modifying it to a considerable degree and are now providing that liability be predicated solely upon the basis of negligence, the same as in automobile accident cases. I recommend that Vermont do likewise.

**Voting.** I further recommend that the legislature give careful consideration to the amendment of our election laws to permit to the fullest extent possible voting by members of the armed services in local, state and national elections they might desire to participate in.

### RECOMMENDED CHANGES IN DEPARTMENTS

The force of our state government activity and the distance it has taken us in the last few years has been great. The charge upon our earnings to support a vastly stepped up military machine will make the task more difficult at the state level to carry on our government. We must perfect economies where we can, improve the efficiency of the service to our people and curtail desirable but not absolutely essential activity where possible. With these thoughts in mind, I turn to the consideration of certain of our state departments where I feel economies and improvements can be made.

**Vermont Development Commission.** The Vermont Development Commission has proven too expensive a set up for the state in view of the results obtained by it. I submit for your consideration the following views relating to the Commission.

The magazine "Vermont Life" should be preserved intact and the set up on this continued substantially as is.

The Commission should be replaced with a new organization to be designated the Vermont Publicity Bureau consisting of a director and a board of three people representative of agriculture, industry and recreation and the new organization given an annual appropriation of \$50,000, this fund to be used mainly for publicity purposes and to support the State Geology program.

There is too much duplication of effort in the state on the work the Commission does by other agencies. The Vermont Industrial Agricultural Products Commission engages in some research and planning along the lines of promotion of agricultural products and industrial use of the same. Likewise the Department of Agriculture. Norwich University is given an annual appropriation under the provisions of Vermont Statute 4505 of \$35,000 annually and the statute reads in part, "The trustees of the University shall maintain a Bureau of Industrial Research for the benefit of the industries of the state and shall designate annually a part of such appropriation for its maintenance." Arts and Crafts also do similar work to that of the Commission. Likewise the Area Development Associations are now doing on an area basis much of the work covered by the activity of the Commission. If my recommendations are adopted by you, the new agency can very well be a clearing house of information on what we have on hand to offer and can cooperate with the Area Development Associations and local Chambers of Commerce in making available to these area and local agencies economic and recreational information sought by outsiders. The savings effected on the basis of these recommendations will be further outlined in the budget.

**Motor Vehicle Department and State Police.** The matter of law enforcement is becoming a very expensive proposition for the people of the state. Requests for appropriations by the Motor Vehicle Department and the State Police for the fiscal years of 1952 and 1953 are as follows:

	1952	1953
Motor Vehicle.....	\$237,461.00	\$246,711.00
State Police.....	562,745.17	613,207.95

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\$800,206.17

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\$859,918.95

Some have felt that the sheriff's system should be permitted to "wither on the vine" because it was an ineffectual body for accomplishing efficient general law enforcement. Others have felt that there have been glaring abuses of the fee system under the old sheriff set-up warranting its abolition. Under any system, abuses may creep in, but the best remedy for them is for the organization to divest itself of its shortcomings and honestly strive to accomplish the purposes for which it is created. The sheriff's system is no exception to this rule, and it still has the opportunity to show the public that sheriffs should not be reduced to the ranks of merely civil process servers. Sheriffs should always try to command the respect of the public in the matter of law enforcement. I believe the sheriffs in the four larger counties of the state are entitled to a paid deputy and in the other counties are entitled to a deputy sheriff on a part time basis.

In these trying times, sheriffs ought to call their deputies together and endeavor to school them in the duties of their office and the part they might play in disaster relief. The Sheriff's force in each county should include some young and vigorous deputies. Proper schooling in their duties should be provided for at least two members of the sheriff's force each year and sheriffs should be willing and desirous of coordinating their activities wherever possible with that of the State Police to accomplish the best kind of team work.

With these thoughts in mind, I would submit for your careful consideration the following observations with reference to economies to be effected and improvements in the matter of general law enforcement to be obtained.

I favor the merging of the Department of Motor Vehicles into the Department of Public Safety as now constituted as a division or bureau thereof and giving to the new consolidated department a new name such as Department of Law Enforcement. The general supervision and control of all the operations, including those of the Fire Marshal's Office, under this new department would be vested in a Director of General Law Enforcement.

The plan of law enforcement under the general supervision and control of such Director, contemplating a force of sixty men in the field variable as to the number of districts needed and the work load involved, would be roughly as follows:

The State would be divided into ten districts and six men would be assigned to each district. One, who would be an experienced trooper, would be assigned by the Director to the district, to deal with general law enforcement mainly, other than highway violations, would be a liaison man between the sheriff's department and the Department of Law Enforcement, would cooperate with the Sheriff's Department in the district in the investigation of crime and apprehension of criminals and would assist sheriffs in criminal work when called upon and his duties would permit to the end that the Sheriff's Department might relieve the Department of Law Enforcement of a substantial portion of its non-highway activity. This trooper would have authority to call on the Sheriff's Department for assistance at any time. The Sheriff's Department would have authority to call upon him at any time as above indicated, and under this set up the facilities of the Department of Law Enforcement would be fully available to the Sheriff's Department when requested.

One officer assigned to the district would do principally the work of inspector and examiner as that work is now carried on by inspectors and examiners in the present Motor Vehicle Department, although subject to call for assistance for general law enforcement activity and highway work when his principal duties would permit. He would also be trained to carry on all these various activities as would all other troopers assigned to a particular district. I believe also that in view of the fact that this officer's duties would take him into urban as well as rural areas that some plan ought to be worked out whereby he could perform the duties of liquor inspector as those duties are now performed by the inspectors of the Liquor Control Board and thereby save unnecessary salaries, travel and expense of two different sets of officers doing different work in the same locality. This would mean the removal from the Liquor Control Board of its inspection service and its placement under the jurisdiction and control of the Department of Law Enforcement. Billboard inspection could likewise be carried on by this officer and expense saved thereby.

The other four men would work in shifts of two, but not necessarily together, the duties of these four men to be confined principally to highway patrol and checking for overweight vehicles, but to assist in non-highway duties when called upon, their highway duties permitting, or when a trooper assigned to general law enforcement was not available.

All of these officers would cooperate, if their duties would permit, with the Fish and Game Department in the detection and apprehension of violators of the Fish and Game Laws.

It might be that fewer districts than ten should be set up in the state, namely, eight or less, but the over all scheme should be a districting that would permit an equitable and even distribution of work load for these men in the respective areas of the state they would be placed in to serve. Use would also be made of existing facilities wherever possible and practicable.

If the Department of Motor Vehicles is merged into a new Department of Law Enforcement, it could be very well moved to Redstone and the space now occupied by the Motor Vehicle Department in the State Office Building utilized by other state agencies using space we are now paying rent on. Savings in office personnel both in the field and at Montpelier could be accomplished by this consolidation. Furthermore, in the handling of motor vehicle accident reports, there is, in my opinion, duplication of effort which could be eliminated if the two departments were consolidated as recommended.

Other economies which could be effected would be the transfer of the collection of the gasoline tax from the Department of Motor Vehicles to the Tax Department.

Consideration should be given to the issuance of only one registration plate to be affixed to the rear of the car, this registration plate to go for at least two years and the second year a small metal clip only evidencing the year issued for the next year to be attached over the year on the registration plate.

A school for the training of recruits and sheriffs, deputy sheriffs and other police officers should be provided for, implemented with sufficient funds to provide at least one week's intensive training course, not only for the training of new men who might from time to time join the force of the Department of Law Enforcement, but also for the purpose of building up a trained reservoir of peace officers not on regular pay status, fit to cope with any emergency. A Certificate of Merit should be given for the successful completion of the course of training given by the school.

In the consolidation of the two departments as aforesaid, all personnel kept on should retain its classification and pay status as much as circumstances and readjustments will permit.

We should never lose sight of the fact that the State Police was set up primarily as a rural constabulary, one purpose of it being to supplement and assist in the work being done by existing law enforcement agencies. It should never be designed for the purpose of doing the work of a national or state guard.

It is felt that by this proposed consolidation, the new department could operate much more cheaply and economically than the two departments are at present. When you receive my budget message, you will realize the full impact of the task facing us to secure funds with which to carry on an adequate highway program and the need for savings where they can be made.

**State Personnel Board.** Some savings could be effected by doing away with the State Personnel Board. In my opinion the Governor should be authorized to appoint a Director of State Personnel. This director should be empowered to make rules and regulations governing the matter of personnel subject to the approval of the Governor. I do not favor the setting up of a separate departmental appropriation for the State Personnel Board at this time. However, if you decide that the State Personnel Board should be continued, its function should be that of a policy making rather than an administrative board.

## PLANNING OUR ECONOMIC FUTURE

**Power.** In spite of the unsettled world conditions under which we live, we must continue to plan for our future economic well being and the subject of power, in my opinion, is one that merits very careful consideration by this Legislature. Demand for more power doubles itself very rapidly. If we are to give

anything more than lip service to the idea we should keep young Vermonters in the state, further power development must go hand in hand with economic development.

I have certain thoughts in connection with this subject which I pass on to you so that you may carefully weigh and consider the same.

I recommend:

A. Re-development of existing power projects and development of feasible power sites, where possible, without doing substantial injury to agriculture.

B. Flood control dams to be used for water storage for power purposes, where they can properly serve that purpose and state policy in the future that they be built for this dual purpose where practicable.

There is now being proposed to be built a flood control dam in the Town of Victory having as one phase of its development the storage of water for power purposes. The location is ideal for both purposes and also for recreation. The overall construction cost of such a multi-purpose dam would be around \$3,000,000 and to build it, very little critical war material would be needed. Three situations present themselves in connection with the possible erection of such a dam. (1) The Federal government might build it, pre-empt the income to be derived from the power phase of it, and leave the states to be affected by its flood control features to regulate that problem by interstate compact, or in the absence of an agreement on such a compact, deal with the flood control phase at the National level. (2) The dam might be built by interstate compact, subject to the approval of the Congress. (3) The state could build the dam and appropriate the income, which I understand might be considerable, towards the payment of costs and eventual lowering of electric rates for our people.

We here in Vermont are prone to be jealous of our sovereignty and to inveigh against Federal encroachments upon it. This is as it should be. However, as an overall thought, we should keep the Federal government from pre-empting the field. Flood control and incidental storage of water for power purposes I conceive to be legitimate state activity. The idea of a planned system of such storage dams to prolong stream flow I feel to be a meritorious one. You may wish to implement the Public Service Commission or some other established state agency with authority to look into and study these matters and take such action relating thereto as you may authorize it to take. You may feel that now is not the opportune time to take action thereon. The question is posed for you to give it careful and considered analysis and decision in the best interests of the people of our state.

C. Development of firm sources of power by the utility or tie-in with a firm source of power sufficient to cope with the conditions which heretofore have resulted in blackouts, dimouts and brown-outs in certain sections of the state.

D. Submission of data by the utility to the Public Service Commission of its anticipated growth for the next decade and its plans to meet that growth.

E. Authority to the Public Service Commission to determine and order where needed, high power transmission lines to be built or rebuilt, to integrate utility systems, for the purpose of insuring firm and reasonable cost sources of power; authority to allocate costs of construction or rebuilding according to the benefits received and if the affected utility or utilities claim they are unable to secure funds to finance the same and the Public Service Commission so determines, then there should be submitted to the Legislature the question of the state guaranteeing the cost to be paid out of utility revenues. In the event St. Lawrence seaway power ever becomes available to us, the importance of an integrated system in permitting the Public Service Commission to competently operate as the bargaining, receiving and distributing agency for and in behalf of the private, municipal and cooperative systems in Vermont, is self-apparent.

**Natural Gas.** I recommend that the Public Service Commission be authorized and instructed to make a study of the possibility of procuring natural gas by pipeline for Vermont and make a report to the Governor thereon as soon as it is possible so to do.

## STATE SERVICES

There are certain of our traditional obligations and responsibilities of government which we as a state must carry out to the fullest extent possible even under the trying circumstances of the times. Certain phases of these responsibilities which I think should be particularly called to your attention are hereinafter set forth in this message. They will also be further specifically dealt with in my budget message and for that reason I do not elaborate upon them in detail at this time.

**Education.** Vermont Statutes Section 3563 provides in substance that when a town or town school district at the end of its fiscal year has a deficit, the selectmen shall assess a tax in multiples of five to provide sufficient revenue to liquidate the same. In the application of this statute, viewed in connection with the provisions of Vermont Statutes Section 3595 and Section 4221, some conflict arises as to when a town school district's fiscal year ends. The question is important because of the possible loss of state aid to the town school district if the deficit is not met as provided by Vermont Statutes Section 3563. These statutes should be clarified and harmonized.

We should have foreseen several years ago the effect that changes like better rural roads and better instruction to rural youth in bigger groups would have upon education and amended our Constitution accordingly to permit the meeting of these changing conditions. There seems to be no difficulty on the consolidation of towns in an area for high school purposes and this should be encouraged in all situations where feasible and larger taxing districts set up so that the necessary cost of building a consolidated high school could more easily be met. Plans should also be worked out for the levying of taxes on the larger unit in order to pay plant costs and to provide the best instruction and adequate transportation. However, there is doubt in my mind as to the legal right of two or more towns to consolidate their elementary schools and for that reason there should be an amendment to the Constitution if towns wish to attack the elementary school consolidation on an area rather than a town basis. However, I do not believe that consolidation should be forced upon a town because the determination of the number of schools therein is a matter of local self-government which should be preserved. Undoubtedly, the impact of the need for additional school buildings and the urge for better school instruction will help to push school consolidations along at the local level.

Because of higher school costs, this legislature should give consideration to the raising of tuition rates payable by towns sending elementary and high school students to other towns or school districts for instruction.

I favor the continuation of the present existing teachers colleges for the state and further recommend that legislation be adopted placing Lyndon Normal Teachers College on a permanent basis with Johnson and Castleton.

**Welfare.** I do not feel that we need a separate juvenile court for Vermont to deal with the case of dependent, neglected and delinquent children at this time. My studies and experiences lead me to believe that the present system of the municipal courts sitting as juvenile courts and having the advantage of reports made by experienced case workers to assist them is adequate under the conditions which exist in Vermont to handle the situation.

The governors of the three states of Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont met at Concord this last fall to discuss the feasibility of jointly building and constructing a plant for the care of defective delinquents. A survey has shown that there are no existing adequate facilities in any of the three states to deal with this class of unfortunates. A recent report by Austin M. MacCormick, executive director of the Osborne Association, Inc., indicates the plant would cost approximately \$2,000,000 to build today, a sum it is not practical for us in Vermont to contribute our proportionate share to at this time. However, I do feel that authority to make further study in cooperation with the other interested states, looking toward a possible ultimate solution of such a problem should be granted by this legislature to the Governor or some department designated by him.

It is my further belief that municipal judges should screen the cases of young delinquents who might be committed to Weeks School very carefully and that like case screening in these times of full employment ought to be made of applicants for aid to dependent children.



**Health.** In view of the growing shortage of trained nurses, I recommend that the legislature approve of the licensing of practical nurses. Again, because of the fact that more doctors and dentists are apt to be taken from our civilian life to meet the medical needs of the armed services, we should do some planning for their replacement. I recommend a modest plan to subsidize through scholarships a limited number of prospective young doctors and dentists who will agree to practice in a Vermont country district for five years after graduation, and I recommend further a recruitment and training program that will insure eventual district nurse coverage for all the communities of the state.

Unfortunate differences of opinion, apparently incapable of reconciliation, have prevented the construction of the state health laboratory authorized by the 1949 legislature. These differences should have been reconciled and the laboratory built long before now so it might be servicing the health needs of the state. I have examined the provisions of No. 184 of the Acts of 1949 creating a new and enlarged Department of Health and feel the Act created too elaborate a set up for our small state. Agencies such as the Vermont Sanatorium, the Washington County Sanatorium, the Brattleboro Retreat, the Vermont State Hospital and the Brandon State School have only an indirect connection with a Department of Health and powers and duties relating to them could better have been left under the Department of Institutions and Corrections. Likewise, Section 10, Subdivision III and Section 13 seem to authorize councils and divisions within the Department of Health whose number and extent are limited only by the size of the overall appropriation which the legislature grants. Such a situation calls for careful and discriminating analysis by you of the experience the Department of Health has had for the last two years with a view to keeping that which has proven good and discarding those councils or divisions we can do without.

If my recommendations above outlined are adopted, the Department of Health then resulting therefrom should be housed and maintained where the state laboratory is built. Trends the country over seem to be to have the executive and administrative office of a Department of Health at the place where the health laboratory is located. I can see no practical objection to this in our small state. Valuable time in matters affecting the public health and considerable expense in travel, lodging and telephoning could be saved if top command and laboratory worker were together. Many good arguments exist for having both located at the seat of government. However, my own feeling in the matter, which this Legislature may give such consideration to as it sees fit is to favor Burlington as an overall location for two reasons: (1) There will be readily available for use if needed the facilities of the Medical College; (2) In the Burlington area is located the greatest concentration of hospital service in the state.

**Highways.** Basically, we want to see our state and state aid highways properly maintained and kept in an adequate state of repair at all times. It is important, likewise, that the state go forward, if possible, on its plans to give to every farmer the advantage of at least a good gravel road from his home to the market place. However, existing statutory sources of revenue for the town roads should not be enlarged upon for town road purposes at this time. It has been and should continue to be the policy of the state to match all Federal funds available for highway construction. Of course, the extent of our highway program for the next two years will be contingent upon many factors that are uncertain at the present time. To implement a highway program of the above nature is going to take considerably more funds. This subject will be further dealt with in detail in the budget message to be delivered to you later.

### **OTHER PHASES OF STATE ACTIVITY**

Some factors in the promotion of our well being which I feel are important to mention at this time are the following:

**Labor.** We must be ever mindful of those who become unemployed because of adverse economic conditions. Their welfare is an obligation which the state has assumed through the Unemployment Compensation Fund provided for by taxes paid by business. This fund should be kept in such a sound state that there will be no question of the protection of our people when and if they are thrown out of work because employment is not available in our industries.

It is recommended that the law be changed so that no employer's tax rate be affected by payment of a claimant's benefits unless such claimant has worked for the employer a certain period of time and has earned a given amount of money.

The number of hearings handled by the Unemployment Compensation Commission has increased considerably lately by reason of the activity of benefits. It is, therefore, recommended that the Commission, on appeals to it, act as a review body reviewing where proper the decision of the referee and that the referee act as hearing officer or trial examiner. By doing this, all rights of the parties would be amply protected, and this would give the Commission more time for its other duties. Likewise, the Legislature should explore the disqualification provision of the Unemployment Compensation Law in order to make these provisions more explicit and effective.

I recommend that this Legislature give consideration to the adoption of an occupational disease law, such law not to be a blanket one, but to cover known industrial hazards in the state and to be a law that would be fair to industry and fair to labor.

**Agriculture.** The Vermont farmer did a very good job in the production of food during World War II. He may be called upon again to repeat his performance of that time.

We should continue with our present Bang's disease program set up in the state for the benefit of the farmers and should also encourage better facilities and information on the control of mastitis.

**Forest.** The forests of our state are very important to our economy as everyone well knows. As one phase of getting more reforestation in Vermont, I recommend you give careful consideration to providing for the placing in every town meeting warning an article each year to see if the town will vote to set up a municipal forest until the article has been favorably acted upon or unless the town has a municipal forest.

We must also give careful consideration to our timber cutting practices with a view to the more general observance of the rules and regulations made by the Board of Forests and Forest Parks. I do not favor the inclusion of penalties into the existing law to compel observance of such rules and regulations of the Board at this time because it would seem that the education of timer owners in conservation and good timber cutting practices under the County Forester System is slowly beginning to bear fruit.

I recommend that this Legislature give careful consideration to the matter of our present tax policies relating to timber land and endeavor to work out a solution whereby the timber owner will not feel that he is forced to liquidate his holdings in order to avoid burdensome taxation. He should be given every encouragement in the reforesting of denuded timberlands.

**Stream Pollution.** It is important that we remain ever mindful of the fact that one of our long-range objectives must be the cleaning up of pollution in our lakes and streams. For this purpose, I believe there is engineering assistance available and it should be furnished the towns of the state in planning for the mastery of their sewage problem. We should further press forward with our classification of waters program, if possible.

## OTHER MATTERS

I might say that there are other matters which will be more fully dealt with in my budget message which time will not permit me to deal with under this inaugural message. However, I mention two of importance, not treated therein.

**Racial Discrimination.** During the period of the Civil War the Vermonter was the most ardent advocate of the abolition of slavery. This was because of our abhorrence of the idea that man, whatever the color of his skin, should ever be the slave of man. We were imbued with the idea that America really meant a land of free opportunity where men of all races, colors and creeds would be on an equality with each other. In this true Vermont tradition we here in this state should look with disfavor upon any discrimination against any individual by reason of his race. I, therefore, recommend that the Governor be authorized to appoint a committee of three disinterested individuals to investigate the matter of racial discrimination in Vermont, and if the report of this committee indicates that such racial discrimination exists, that such discrimination be barred by statute.

**Microfilming Of Records.** Some of our Public Records are in poor shape and not adequately housed. Increase in the volume of Public Records must be expected as the years go by. Such growth is a problem confronting all states and some day will necessitate more building space being provided for storage unless there is some other solution to the problem. I recommend that the Public Records Commission be authorized and instructed to make careful study of the feasibility of microfilming our public records and report and make recommendations to the next Legislature for such action as it may see fit to take.

## **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, let me leave this thought with you. My recollections go back to a picture. It is one that left a vivid impression on me as a youth. The picture is that of a Puritan going to church. His wife accompanies him. In the crook of his right arm he carries a musket. His mission in that journey is to carry out his God-given duty and responsibility to worship the Deity according to the dictates of his own conscience. His musket is for protection if sudden onslaught by the savage arrests him in his course.

Like this Puritan and his wife of old, we want to journey onward in the performance of our duties and responsibilities to the people. But like the Puritan, we may be suddenly arrested in our course, or forced to proceed with cautious tread. We Vermonters have always been a hardy and self-reliant people, willing to lay aside the plans of the moment in order to perform other or more arduous duties which the exigencies of the times may thrust upon us. That may be the position we will find ourselves in once again. This thought must be continually kept in mind in the deliberations we are about to embark upon. Let us in the true Vermont tradition weigh well our responsibilities and duties during this session of the Legislature and endeavor as much as circumstances will permit to carry on good government for the benefit of the people of our state. At the same time let us promise ourselves that if ordinary pursuits and the orderly course of our governmental progress temporarily have to be sidetracked because of war conditions, we as true Vermonters willingly accept such difficulties as necessary to preserve the democratic way of life.