

Inaugural address
of

Philip H. Hoff

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Inaugural Address

Lieutenant-Governor Daly, Mr. Speaker, President Pro Tem, Members of the Clergy, Members of the General Assembly and my fellow Vermonters:

We are assembled today at the direction of the people of Vermont to chart a new course in the history of our great State.

I am convinced that Vermont is already feeling the stirrings of change that promise the greatest era of progress and development in our history.

The forces at work in our world have created almost unparalleled opportunities for Vermont and it is our responsibility to meet this challenge.

We must act to control these changes and not be content merely to acknowledge them as inevitable.

Today, more than ever before, we must look outward to understand the changes that are taking place within our own society.

Ours is a world of many quiet revolutions going on simultaneously. Some are easily noted. Others, perhaps more difficult to define, give promise of equally dramatic impact upon our lives.

The revolution in communications and transportation has opened Vermont to the world in a way not imagined possible a generation ago. It demands we educate our children for living and working in one world.

Population expansion and attendant problems of urbanization make the open space and untouched beauty of Vermont the envy of countless thousands. It would be naive to think that this population explosion will not have a tremendous impact upon our State. We must prepare now to preserve the untouched quality of Vermont from unplanned and uncontrolled urban growth.

The revolution in technology with its promise of a substantially reduced work week opens a new era where the effective utilization of free time will figure more and more in economic development and growth of our State.

The revolution in knowledge makes education crucial in our planning for the future.

These are but a sampling of the forces at work in our world today that require us to broaden our scope as citizens not only of Vermont but as citizens of a global community.

We are indeed fortunate that we face this challenge as citizens of Vermont.

For Vermonters have a firm tradition of dedication to democracy.

The strength of our democracy has been that it was not conceived to be, nor can we permit it to become merely a set of rules to control public organization and debate.

Democracy is not neutral.

It is not indifferent to the outcome of man's efforts to live meaningfully. It is firmly anchored on hope and faith in man's capacity to build the good life within a free society.

It is an open system of values which embraces change and which weaves new events into the fabric of our life as free men.

With this concept of democracy in mind, let us now consider specific proposals designed to meet the problems and to grasp the opportunities presented by the forces at work in our society.

We have the resources to make Vermont a showcase for democracy. I suggest to you that the people have the will to make our State a laboratory for progress.

Let us declare our determination that Vermont has not faltered and will not be dissuaded from a bold program of action not only to secure the right of every citizen to full and equal representation, but also to assure the right of every Vermonter to a productive life pursued in freedom and dignity.

REAPPORTIONMENT

Our first obligation is to meet the challenge of the 14th Amendment to provide equal protection to all citizens before the law.

The Courts have told us what we all have suspected for many years. That is, of course, that our General Assembly is malapportioned and that we must reapportion it on the basis of one man, one vote.

This then is the Assembly's first and most urgent task.

I urge you all to consider this simple fact ... If this Legislature fails to re-organize itself to extend the franchise so that it is equally shared by every citizen of Vermont, it will be done by the courts.

I am confident that our record as independent and fair-minded citizens will not be stained by failure to accomplish this task.

Thus, our first responsibility here is to properly shape our Legislature, our basic instrument for enactment of public policy, to better meet the demands of our Democratic heritage and the needs of contemporary society.

The United States Supreme Court has decreed it to be the law of the land that legislative bodies of the several States must provide for representation based on population.

This principle cannot and it will not be compromised.

Nothing will better serve notice to the world that Vermonters are again at the forefront in the fight for basic human rights than prompt action on this issue.

Nothing will better symbolize our determination to translate the dreams of our forebears into reality.

We do not seek to defy tradition.

We seek only to breathe new vitality into aspirations that for too long have gathered dust in the public archives.

If there is a single thread that links the world of today with the aspirations of those who charted Vermont's course as a State, it is the idea that government exists to serve the needs of the people when these needs cannot be better met by citizens acting in private concert.

Similarly, it is that government is viable and subject to modification as the needs of citizens change.

Let me quote from a man whose hands held the pulse of our State at its birth. ... Ethan Allen said in an address to the people of Vermont:

All good and wise men, will exert themselves in establishing and supporting good government and order, which are inseparably connected together. Formed constitutions and modes of government may and undoubtedly are, more or less imperfect; Yet they may, in future, be corrected and amended as time of leisure, cool deliberation, and experience may dictate."

Ethan Allen, of course, was not alone in his conviction that government is not simply the instrumentality of majority will, but the government's role is to transcribe public necessity into action to serve the greatest good for the greatest number of people.

To accomplish this, government must be directly related to people, not some of the people, but all of the people.

Equal representation in government does not pit town against town. Neither does it pit urban residents against rural residents, or those over twenty-one against those who have yet to reach their majority.

Bearing this in mind and the many weeks of thoughtful study and planning that have already gone into solution of this problem, I am certain this task can and will be met with speed and with justice.

Differences of opinion still exist on this issue but I am confident that Vermonters as men of reason and good will are determined not to fail in this task.

Rather than to delay or defy what we know must come to pass, I urge the members of this Assembly to

face the task of reapportionment immediately and with determination to get the job done so that we can move forward in other areas where action, as we all know, is so urgently needed.

In doing this I would certainly not oppose speedy submission of a reapportionment plan, or even several plans, to the Courts for review.

CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

There has been public discussion about possible referral of this question to a Constitutional Convention.

Once we have met the order to reapportion, it would be to Vermont's overall advantage for the new Legislature to convene a convention to bring our Constitution in line with the realities of a Court-approved system of representation.

Such a convention would then write into our basic frame of government other long-needed reforms.

These would certainly include provision for:

Annual legislative sessions subject to a cut-off period.

A four year term for Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and other elected State officials.

Clarification and reform of the elective process to eliminate the confusion surrounding past elections which involved the necessity for legislative recounts.

Liberalizing the provisions for amending the Constitution and elimination of the ten-year time lock.

A strengthening of the executive arm through changes in the mode of naming such administrative officers as the State Treasurer and Secretary of State.

Constitutional embodiment of a plan for continuing apportionment of the Assembly in accordance with changing population patterns.

Constitutional provision for a House of Representatives greatly reduced in size.

Elimination of our outmoded system of State's Attorneys.

Prompt compliance with the mandate to reapportion now and provision for these other basic reforms in our structure of government through a convention would fulfill both responsibilities with a minimum of confusion and with no threat to the orderly continuation of the State's business.

STATUS OF COURT ACTION

The Supreme Court has stayed the lower Court's decree that we act on reapportionment and reapportionment alone.

But this cannot be taken as an indication that we will be permitted to procrastinate or that we may ignore our responsibilities to reapportion. At best the Supreme Court will merely extend the time in which to reapportion and allow the General Assembly to act on business other than reapportionment. It must also be borne in mind that the Supreme Court might well affirm the lower Court's original order.

THE TASK AHEAD

We are fortunate at the moment that we can pursue the task of reapportionment while also acting to move Vermont ahead in other areas.

Two years ago I urged that we re-evaluate and reform our program of public services in light of the dramatic changes underway in our society and the people of Vermont have served notice that they want this done.

Vermonters realize that we cannot divorce ourselves from the world, that the events in far-off corners of the globe directly affect our daily lives.

This fact is one we cannot afford to state and then ignore. This fact must be reflected in our approach to education, to the conservation of our natural resources, to economic development and the very organization of our system of state and local government.

Vermont has a strong tradition of town government. Our town boundaries were drawn in colonial times

roughly along lines six miles square. This was done arbitrarily and with the exception of major rivers, natural boundaries were frequently ignored.

In the days of communication no more rapid than a horse and rider, our towns served as efficient and effective units for the control and operation of education, welfare, highways and other public programs.

But over the years these arbitrary town lines have increasingly become barriers to efficient and effective public programs.

This has been recognized and some action has been taken to cross town lines in the administration of certain public services.

Our administrative units have frequently been extended and expanded largely, however, on a haphazard basis and without regard to the overall needs of the people of the State.

Progress in one area of the State has not always been matched in other areas.

A REGIONAL APPROACH

We now have the information available to organize many of these services on a regional basis so that they can be more effectively administered for all the people of Vermont. To this end, I am calling for a regional approach to education, tax assessing, planning, development, probate courts, municipal courts, state's attorneys, and ultimately to our town and State aid system of roads, although here action may have to be deferred until 1966.

This is the key to our present program of reorganization and revitalization of our governmental services.

We aim to organize these services in districts that include the human and economic resources required to support them. This is the only feasible way for us to assure equality of educational and economic opportunity to all Vermonters regardless of the town in which they reside.

With imagination and the determination to creatively utilize our traditions and resources we can set the pace for progress in combating educational deficiencies, poverty, and other problems.

Vermont has the talent and the resources to achieve this goal. We also are small enough so that the magnitude of the problem can be clearly seen and our progress can be easily demonstrated.

EDUCATION

Our greatest resource and our greatest responsibility is the talent of our people.

Two years ago I described education as the keystone to our future development. This is even more true today.

We have made great progress in the past two years. State-aid has been increased and is now distributed on an equalized basis.

Much remains to be done, however, before we can say to ourselves we are meeting the needs of today, much less the needs of tomorrow.

For this reason I recommend an additional 1.5 million dollars in State-aid to local school districts in 1966 and 2.5 million in 1967, or a total of 4 million for the biennium. It is anticipated that the additional million in 1967 will be keyed to quality and/or regionalization.

This will provide for total State-aid of approximately \$9,000,000 in 1966 and \$10,000,000 in 1967.

Besides these increases in State-aid to education under the formula, my budget will provide for 1.8 million in new aid for construction and operation of area vocational centers.

Fifty percent of this money will be Federal grants.

In considering State-aid to education we must also note that Vermont will be required to supply approximately 1 million of State funds to continue the present federally financed manpower retraining program.

Of equal importance in our endeavor to better educate our young people is the reorganization of our school districts so that they more adequately include the resources required for their support.

I will submit to you a plan for regionalized districts that will accomplish this on a voluntary basis but which will not permit our residents to disregard the need for rapid progress in this area.

This task requires additional money to strengthen the Department of Education, to finance more classes for the mentally retarded and the handicapped, for retraining and for vocational education as I will outline in my budget message.

Ever increasing costs for top quality educational programs at the level beyond the high school must also be recognized.

We embarked upon a pilot program of State-guaranteed loans for college freshmen earlier this year. Despite predictions that there was no need for this, the program has already helped many, many young Vermonters finance their college education.

This aid must be expanded and I will recommend that it be consolidated with a program of State scholarships administered on the basis of merit by an independent Board rather than through our individual Senators as is presently done.

Additional funds will be required also to strengthen the quality of educational programs at the University of Vermont and our State colleges.

Authority will be sought to assist private colleges and secondary schools through State guarantee of loans for plant and capital improvements as is now authorized for industrial projects.

You will be asked to inaugurate an educational television network and to increase minimum salaries for Vermont public school teachers.

COURTS

The concept of better organizing our resources in support of public enterprise and private well-being applies to the administration of justice.

A district or regional organization of our Courts has had widespread support for many years.

Certainly, this basic reform of our Courts is long overdue. In this age we need a system of District Courts presided over by full-time adequately paid judges and this should apply equally to our present Probate Courts as well as to our Municipal Courts.

Linked to this should be a network of full-time adequately paid district attorneys supervised by a strengthened Attorney General's office.

No reform of our Court system will be complete without modification of our system for the selection of superior judges. I strongly endorse a method patterned after the Missouri Plan.

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

The concept of district reorganization is also essential for us to follow if we are to promote greater effectiveness at the least cost in the field of planning and development.

We must structure our public services to more effectively reflect our changing population patterns.

Here again, I propose a new program of State assistance to local industrial development groups to stimulate regional planning and zoning. This will involve additional State personnel and grants to regional organizations that meet realistic standards. We must promote increased programs of research and development to assist the residents of every area in the State in reaching their maximum potential. This applies equally if our agricultural growth is to be more than a series of crisis situations. A pilot project is nearly operational and should provide effective guide lines for progress in long range assistance to farmers.

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

This means adequate paying jobs and a Department of Labor to oversee the operation of day-to-day industrial relations. This also requires a minimum wage tied directly to the national level. I recommend consolidation of the Department of Employment Security and the Department of Industrial Relations into a new Department of Labor. With this should be passed a Little Wagner Act.

The extension of coverage of unemployment benefits as well as a strengthened program of workman's

compensation are directly related to this development program.

So too is continued provision for the manpower retraining program and increased emphasis on vocational training.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Of equal importance to total development of our State is the conservation of our natural resources and the protection of our heritage of scenic beauty from the blight of uncontrolled urban sprawl.

This will require increased State-aid for local pollution abatement programs. It will require broadening the State's land condemnation authority for certain public purposes.

It will require minimum flow legislation and a long range program to assure every Vermonter an adequate water supply.

The cleaning up of our streams, the protection of our wealth of water resources should also include expansion of coordinated recreational facilities. In this regard, I will recommend increased bonding to finance State participation in developing Federal and State outdoor recreation programs.

I anticipate great progress in this area within the next few years. Vermont and the nation are deeply committed to the planned public development of our forests, our parks and our unique natural geographic areas.

This will increasingly involve State-Federal cooperation in multi-purpose development of our resources. It will also require that we move forward promptly to meet our need for regional zoning.

A land use survey is underway. It is an essential step in a regional zoning plan I propose to present in 1966.

HEALTH, WELFARE, SAFETY

In the same manner we cannot separate highway safety and the expansion of our State police force from other programs designed to protect human resources. We cannot treat agriculture apart from the food stamp program we will recommend.

These are merely facets of a single, far-reaching effort to move our State forward so that our people may enjoy a fuller, safer and healthier life.

I will recommend an expansion in our welfare department, an expanded program of highway safety, and expansion of our State Police to include forty-two new troopers during the biennium.

Vermonters as consumers must have more protection through expanded public health programs. Driver training programs merit State support as do projects designed to seek out and retrain persons who make our highways unsafe.

Specifics of these programs will be spelled out in future messages, as will my recommendations for highways and State finances.

GOVERNMENT OPERATION

The competition for progress in an ever-shrinking world has intensified the need for top quality men and women to serve State government. This competition for talent demands that we more adequately compensate those who serve. It also demands that we reorganize our government to assure a full dollar's return for a dollar spent.

I recommend a major revision in our pay scale, and consolidation of more of the executive branch of government as called for by the Little Hoover Commission. Similarly I will recommend creation of a Legislative Council to strengthen the operations of the General Assembly, and this is long overdue.

In this area, as in so many others, we have moved forward. But the steps outlined above should be taken if we are indeed to become the showcase for democracy or the laboratory for progress that I know that we all desire.

It is within our grasp. It merits our full attention and best effort.

STEWARDS OF HOPE

Ours is a time not of triumph but of dedication.

We meet here not as exponents of party but as stewards of hope.

We share a sacred trust, the future of our great State.

Let us draw that future in bold strokes with confidence in our mission and faith that men of reason and good will can chart a course of action that will serve humanity.

Working together I am confident that with divine guidance, we can and we will meet the test of our times. . . . That no man, however humble his origin, however remote his domicile be denied the opportunity to fully exploit and enjoy his status as a member of our free society. Thank you very much.