

# INAUGURAL MESSAGE

of

# DWIGHT GRISWOLD

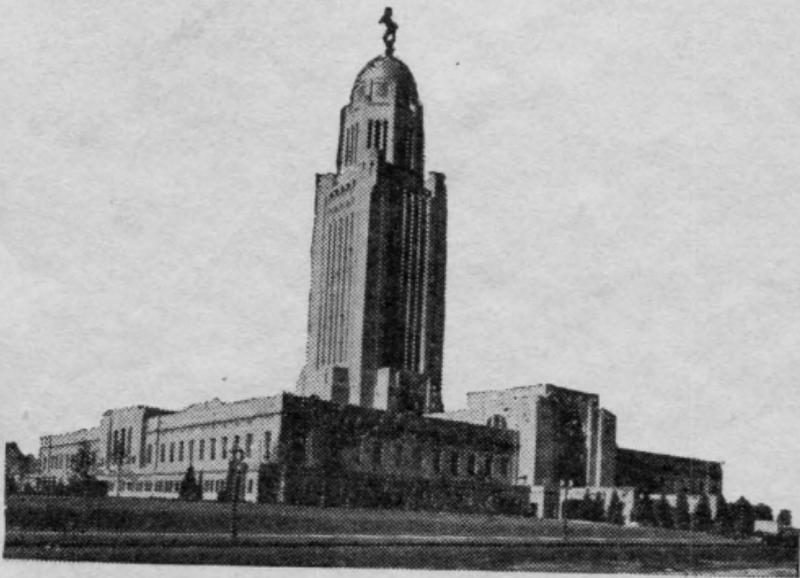
## GOVERNOR

To The

MEMBERS OF THE FIFTY-SIXTH SESSION

Of The

STATE LEGISLATURE OF NEBRASKA



Delivered January 7, 1943

Lincoln, Nebraska



DWIGHT GRISWOLD  
Governor of Nebraska

Mr. President, Members of the Senate:

You gentlemen have been chosen by the people of Nebraska to assemble here and work in their behalf. I am here as Governor, chosen by the same people, elected for a second term.

Our task is different from that usually confronting a legislature and a governor because our nation is now engaged in a horrible war which, in one way or another, is thrusting its way into the life of every man, woman and child. It completely dominates our thoughts.

These are days of danger—danger not only from the vicious struggle for survival but from the inevitable post-war period when proper re-adjustment will be threatened by swarms of crackpot schemes.

What can we—the governing authorities of this state—what can we do during a brief legislative session to repel these dangers?

There are signs to guide us.

Two years ago at my inauguration I stated that very few new laws were needed for Nebraska and that my duty was rather to furnish a better administration of the laws we already had. Since then we in the executive departments have worked on that premise. If there were doubts as to its soundness, I think those doubts were washed away by the voters on November Third.

Now again I say, but even more emphatically, we can do the people of Nebraska a real service by just leaving them alone. Our people are busy with crops and livestock, they are busy in factory and business, they are busy with thoughts of fighting sons, husbands

and fathers. In the name of common sense, let us rise above this fad of regulation and leave our people free to work and fight for the victory which must be won.

That is my paramount recommendation.

Two years ago we could not know, of course, that within eleven months, war would come to us. Our planning necessarily was based upon what we thought might happen. It was your foresight in creating the defense organization and in establishing an emergency appropriation, which permitted the state to properly function without a special legislative session. I trust the same foresight will continue with the enactment of war emergency measures, effective only for the duration.

So that you would not be delayed in your consideration of this emergency program or in your consideration of such other routine and corrective legislation as I have to offer, these bills have been printed. They are now ready for introduction. My budget recommendations are also ready. This is in keeping with plans of your own Legislative Council which, I believe, has its own legislative program ready for submission. Consequently, you can begin work at once. The avenue is open for a short, business-like session, free from petty squabbles—a session worthy of Nebraska and one of which you as senators may well be proud.

As the session progresses, many other bills will be placed before you from other sources. In considering them I suggest you bear in mind that our state agencies must contemplate assisting in the war effort by the orderly release of all possible manpower. State and municipal

construction work should stop. Travel must be held to a minimum. Like other Americans, we in the state's service, must be willing to work longer hours. We ask such performance and more of our fighting men; we cannot shirk it ourselves.

We will also aid in the war effort by keeping taxes at a minimum. People must have opportunity to pay the tremendously increased federal taxes, meet higher living costs and invest in War Bonds. In my judgment, there are better ways of avoiding inflation than by levying taxes, merely to reduce consumer purchasing power.

As you work, remember Nebraska is a great state. We have no state debt of any kind, we impose neither a sales nor income tax, and we are the only state in the Union with such a record. In addition, we have about two million dollars in our general fund, nine million dollars in other funds, and about fourteen million dollars invested in bonds. As a state, we own 1,700,000 acres of land. We have the most beautiful Capitol in the nation—all these paid for in full.

You as Senators, and I, as Governor, have a heritage to uphold; the reputation of a state to keep. But we have even more. I say to you that Nebraska is in a position to become a governmental model for the other states and for the nation itself. To people beset with doubts and uncertainties, we can give sorely needed reassurance by proving that in Nebraska are legislators and executives who are statesmen, voting for what is right even though it be temporarily unpopular; statesmen who

trust the people and who can be trusted by the people. In this we must not fail.

When this war is won—and won it shall be—our nation will have a national debt of more than two hundred, perhaps three hundred billion dollars, blooming in the shadows of an over-stuffed bureaucracy. We will have with us tens of thousands of governmental problem children, the offspring of this bureaucracy, all suckled on red tape and accustomed to giving orders to the people. We will all be tempted by recent habit to look to the government for help with every difficulty that confronts us.

This is not a partisan problem; it is an American problem and it bids fair to become the great American tragedy. We of Nebraska, as Americans, must assist in solving it. The solution will not come easily and it will require foresight and faith, courage and conviction. And the task will be complex because as we cut away the tangled growth of demagoguery, we must be vigilant to preserve the good roots.

We recognize, certainly, that there is important governmental work to be done; that there can be proper planning by public agencies representing the whole people; that society has a responsibility to care for those in real need; that Labor is entitled to fair treatment; that Capital has a right to prosper; that work and industry deserve rewards, but, above all, that in times of peace the individual citizen shall be master of his own destiny.

Under a system of free enterprise, we built here an industrial order which trained the workmen and built the factories which are

today saving us and saving the World. In this land of free decision, we have raised the young men who have gone out with courage and faith in their hearts, and with a smile on their lips, to fight the enemy on land and sea, and in the air.

“The American Way of Life” is more than a name and it must be retained.

So again I ask, what can we—here, this winter—do to make sure Nebraska shoulders her proper share of the current and coming problems?

We must prove that our state, a large unit of government, can be operated in a business-like, efficient manner; that useless positions need not be created; that appropriations can be wisely made; that Nebraska is fully capable of making progress without making debts. As we keep our standard of government high, we will be living up to our responsibility by setting an example others may wish to follow.

Our people have already shown they know how to do much, with little. Our farms, with scars of drouth fresh upon them, have in one year, through hard work and sacrifice, made an amazing production record. Volunteers have risen by the thousands to aid in necessary civilian defense work and scrap drives. Our industries, battling shortages, have plunged into twenty-four hour operations without a serious misstep. Surely, we need have no fear that our people lack spirit, intelligent enterprise, or competent self-control.

We can best recognize their accomplishments by leaving them unbothered and unhampered by trivial legislation and new

schemes. We can take care of present day emergencies, make necessary corrections, pass an appropriations bill, and permit people to go ahead with their work.

That is our immediate duty. Our swift and efficient execution of it can well serve as a bright beacon in a dark sky.