

M E S S A G E

of

GEO. W. P. HUNT,

GOVERNOR OF ARIZONA

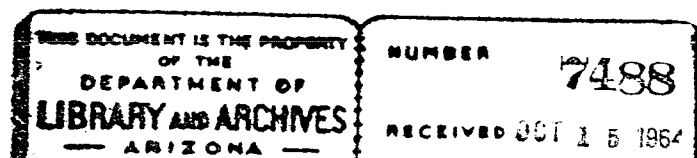
to the

SECOND STATE LEGISLATURE

First Special Session.

PHOENIX

April Twenty-third, Nineteen-Fifteen



Arizona Governor, 1911-1919 (George Wylie Paul Hunt)

TO THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:

At this particular time, when it again becomes my duty, in fulfillment of law, and in discharge of the responsibility placed upon me by the electorate, to address the supreme lawmaking body of the State, I shall not go far afield in quest of either pretexts or valid reasons for voluble expression but prefer rather to fittingly sound the keynote of the occasion by erring, if at all, on the side of terseness in bidding you a cordial welcome, in briefly recounting the immediate needs of the State, and in pledging my most whole-hearted cooperation in furthering, through suitable legislation, the general welfare of all Arizona and the sovereign people who collectively constitute her citizenship/

The purposes of the present special session are so fully contained in the issued call as to need merely emphasizing rather than elucidation in this brief message to the Legislature. Concisely expressed, the State, through lack of appropriations for the maintenance of departments, and because of the absence of any statute giving specific directions for fixing the rates of taxes during the two fiscal years next ensuing, is confronting an actual crisis of such serious aspect and proportions as to impose upon legislative and executive officers alike the necessity of prompt and judicious effort toward securing the adoption of such provident measures as will permit the continued competent discharge of public business.

While it is plainly the part of redundancy to dwell in passing upon the gravity of an emergency which is evident to the most casual observer, I shall, nevertheless, even at the risk of trite reiteration, suggest most earnestly the essential nature of monetary provision for departmental and institutional use, and of conserving, through a speedy consummation of legislative work, the resources of the people, who,

inevitably, must always bear the burden of taxation. To pursue any other course, or to utterly fail in the discharge of a manifest duty would very apparently create a condition so appalling and so clearly repugnant to the general welfare as to transcend even the possibility of contemplation and need not, therefore, be admitted as worthy of serious consideration.

The preparation of the call whereby the Second State Legislature of Arizona was convened in special session involved no slight measure of reflection upon the needs of the State and the best means of speedily securing such legislative action as is vitally necessary. Although, in the exercise of my best personal judgment, and with the welfare of the public fully in view, I found it advisable to so restrict the scope of the call as to insure a concentration of effort upon those subjects which stand first in order of importance among the needs of the State, it was not my purpose, in so doing, to visit discomfiture upon any one or deny the important character of numerous other topics which were presented to my attention with the request that they be included in the proclamation. In at least several instances of this kind, it was a matter of keen regret for me to exclude subjects, which were deserving of more than passing consideration, and which were suggested not only by citizens having the well-being of the State thoroughly at heart, but also, as in some cases, by members of the Legislature in whose sagacity I place profound confidence and reliance. Notwithstanding the impertunate requests addressed to me in this connection, and, likewise, my respect for their sponsors, it appeared conclusively to me, after due deliberation, and with the experience of past legislative sessions firmly in mind, that even though the intent and endeavor of individual legislators might be of the most worthy and exalted nature, our somewhat cumbersome system of lawmaking is such that the embodiment of a multi-

plicity of subjects in a legislative call results, so invariably as to constitute a generalization, in an expensive, prolonged session during which even such primarily important matters as the actual maintenance of governmental departments are not infrequently neglected or ignored in favor of legislation having little or no reason for being, unless it is to pay a political debt or satisfy the demands of organized parties intent upon obtaining special privilege.

Although nothing is more remote from my mind than to make this message in the slightest degree apologetic, I feel that the foregoing statement of the conditions which led to a narrowly restricted call is due those numerous worthy citizens and officials who, having the public welfare at heart equally with me, were desirous of having additional subjects brought up for consideration at this session of the legislature. Most earnestly and sincerely do I assure you that the course, which I eventually pursued in the formulation of the call, was dictated by evident necessity, and by recognition of a serious public exigency. Being, moreover, charged by the people with certain responsibilities concomitant with my office, I cannot conscientiously do otherwise than firmly adopt those measures, which are, in my best judgment, designed to at once safeguard and advance the interests of the State. To act in any other way would amount to a betrayal or, at least, a neglectful disposition of the sacred trust reposed by the electorate in its Executive.

More in the nature of a conventional reiteration of a portion of my last message to the Legislature than as a notable recommendation, I again lay emphasis upon the <sup>apparent</sup> necessity of so providing appropriations as to facilitate the economical but efficient functioning of State departments and institutions. While it is scarcely necessary to give a definition of the oft-used term, "reasonable economy", I crave your indul-

gence momentarily in again maintaining that a really laudable desire to insure the greatest possible conservation of public funds would never, under any conceivable circumstances, dictate an unreasoning disposition to so shortsightedly curtail departmental allowances as to prevent the effective discharge of public business, the employment of sufficient, competent help, or the advancement of education, thereby retarding the State's development and bringing its government into general disrepute.

As compared with the paramount necessity of conserving the public's interests, all petty prejudice and every tendency toward political sorties and reprisals must, in deference to the common welfare, fade into insignificance, or, at least, be temporarily foregone to the end that, at the conclusion of the legislative session now being inaugurated, the work performed and the results achieved may justly be accorded the endorsement of the citizenry of Arizona in whose behalf all civic and governmental organization of the State is devised, supported and operated.

In this commendable undertaking, greater than which there is none, I hope to extend such endeavor and co-operation as the governorship properly imposes, and accordingly, your honorable body is cheerfully assured of my willingness to supplement your worthy endeavors by such timely and well directed effort as may be commensurate with my duty to the State which rightly requires my utmost loyalty and constant service.

Respectfully submitted,

GEO. W. P. HUNT,

Governor of Arizona.