

consciousness of North Carolina.

Freedom From Obligations

"I am taking office today a free man. I owe no private obligation to any man or interest aside and apart from the public good. I am not hampered by any pledges or promises. I was nominated by the Democratic party without opposition and elected by the people of this state. I am a strong party man, and I love the Democratic party and am proud of its past and hopeful of its future, but today I become the Governor of all the people of North Carolina and shall consecrate myself anew to the service of my state, and it shall be my definite aim and unflinching purpose to deal justly with every interest in North Carolina, and to know no party, creed or nationality in the discharge of my official duties in the administration of the laws and in the preservation of the rights of the people.

New Laws

"It shall be my purpose to make specific recommendations to the General Assembly from time to time with reference to needed legislation. I have necessarily left untouched in this message many questions of vital importance, but I shall not seek the passage of any great number of new laws. I do not believe the state needs and vast amount of new legislation. I have no sympathy with the idea that the passage of new laws always means progress; and I shall not delude myself with the thought that any and all problems of government can be solved by merely passing laws. I recommend to this honorable body the passage of only such legislation as shall be manifestly needed for the public good; and then that this legislation shall be carefully thought out, well considered, and judiciously determined. Respect for laws enacted will have an important relation to the degree of care and sternness with which they are enacted.

Primary Law

"In line with my thought concerning public interest in government must necessarily be considered public interest in both primaries and elections. There has been, and will be, much complaint as to primaries and the manner of conducting them and the cost involved—and some of these complaints are well founded; yet I am convinced that the legalized party primary is the best method yet devised for the selection of candidates. My belief is that it should be strengthened, safeguarded and protected, and the defects remedied as far as possible. Such changes as are made should provide for greater security to the voter and provide for clearer and more unhampered expressions of the popular will of the party, and make the use of improper methods or influences more difficult. The primary should be made to function so that it will emphatically register the choice of the voters of the party for its nominees.

Secret Ballot

"With the changes strengthening the primary laws there should be enacted an adequate secret ballot law for the general election, popularly known and designated as the Australian ballot system. I believe that elections in North Carolina are as fair, honest and just as elections in the other states of the Union; and that they are much freer from corruption and fraud than the elections in many states; but I believe that conditions may still be further improved by the passage of a fair and just secret ballot law. It would give greater freedom to the voter, would remove much of the incentive to use money in elections, and would tend to place our elections on a basis not only fair to everybody, but where everybody would know that they were fair. I sincerely commend to the General Assembly careful consideration of this measure and earnestly recommend its passage—believing that it will result in making our elections more wholesome; that it will tend to lessen their enormous cost—which is increasing in every campaign; and that it will make the improper or corrupt use of money more difficult.

Workmen's Compensation

"North Carolina has grown so rapidly in industry during recent years that the state is passing through a transition period—changing from an almost wholly agricultural state to a well advanced and almost evenly divided industrial state—and this changed condition suggests the crying need for a fair and just workmen's compensation law, which I believe should be provided by the General Assembly. This would serve the needs of labor in providing a quick, economical and efficient method of adjusting the claims for injuries, loss of time and damages, and would relieve the claimants of a large part of the expense and delay incident to court trials, would relieve them of the burden of proving the negligence of the industry, and at the same time would tend to relieve some of the congestion now prevailing on the dockets of our courts. It would also be more satisfactory to industry because it would mean fixed and stated standards for determining compensation, and would not leave the question open to the speculative determination of a court trial. This law should be fair to the employe and not oppressive or unjust to the employer.

Public Health

"Of all the activities of government in the state, I do not believe that any are of more importance than those relating to the public health. Already much has been accomplished

We have gone a long way in preventing the spread of contagious diseases, in stamping out dreaded epidemics among all classes of people, in preserving and protecting child life, and in removing disabilities and correcting deficiencies by the varied clinics held and conducted throughout the state. The state can happily boast of the highest birth rate of any state in the Union consecutively for the past eight years; and with greater pride we can truthfully assert that we are doing much to preserve the lives of children born into the state so that the state mortality in North Carolina has been greatly reduced. Along with the highest birth rate we have the companion boast of a very low death rate—which should be a source of great satisfaction. I cherish the hope that during my administration public health may be still further conserved, and that the agencies and instrumentalities serving the people in this respect may be greatly strengthened and enlarged. I entertain the hope that every county in North Carolina may eventually have a whole time health officer and public nurse, and that sufficient hospital facilities may be provided in every county to take care of those needing hospital treatment—including the necessary tubercular sanatoriums. Add to the natural charm of climate and healthful atmosphere adequate health facilities and the people of this state should be much happier than those of any commonwealth.

Education

"We regard our public school system as the cornerstone of American liberty and the mightiest bulwark of our free people. It is here that the children are educated. The vast majority of the children of the state get their first and last scholastic training and equipment in the public schools; and, therefore, the constant aim must be—and shall be—to make these schools efficient and sufficient for the childhood of the state. We look forward with increasing hope to the realization of the dream of the immortal Aycock when every person in the confines of this state shall be able to read and write in the Mother tongue.

"Intelligent public opinion is essential to good government, social progress, and moral conduct. The cryptic expression that ignorance is a cure for nothing is especially true today, when discoveries and inventions are multiplying at an ever increasing rate.

pend upon its proper uses—never before in our history. Education, therefore, and schools, the agencies of the state for forwarding education, will and should command the best thought and wisest devotion of my administration.

"We speak with just pride of our educational progress, but this progress does not apply to all alike. Seventy-six per cent of the white children of North Carolina now have the advantages of the eight-months term. They have given themselves the additional two months—many of them at a great sacrifice. The other twenty-four per cent, living in sparsely settled communities that contain much less per capita wealth, have not been able without a much greater burden to provide the extra two months for themselves.

"If we sing the praise of that part of our population that has been sufficiently progressive to plan wisely and establish firmly the eight months' term on a county-wide basis, or if we commend sections of a county that have moved toward our county-wide plan and in this way have secured the eight months' term for portions of our counties, we certainly should have concern for the less favored parts of our state—here and there—for the twenty-four per cent that have been unable for many reasons to secure educational advantages equal to those acquired by their neighbors who are more fortunately located.

"That a minimum eight months' term is necessary for the children of our business, industrial, and commercial classes inhabiting towns and cities is accepted by them without question; and more and more are such schools incorporating in their programs of study those subjects that equip the children of these classes for the vocations which they may enter later in life.

"Can any convincing argument be offered to prove that the rural sections of our state are not entitled to at least the same minimum opportunities which are admitted to be essential to all other classes of our population? We are seriously concerned over the condition of agriculture and the economic status of our agricultural classes, but how can we expect to build a great rural life unless we make possible an intelligent public opinion, which is the first step toward making the farming class self-reliant?

"The equalization fund which has constantly grown is found to be absolutely essential in providing a six months' term. The time has come again when there should be another reasonably substantial increase in this fund so that the tax rates may be still further reduced in many counties. The general principles upon which this fund is now administered are wisely conceived and the policy of equalization has been adopted by many leading states.

"We should be disturbed when we recall that the heavier tax burden is now carried by those rural districts that seek to provide the additional two months' term. Here an inequality stands out most glaringly. So great is it in some of our rural sections that this tax for an additional two months' term is far greater than

the tax paid by the same people for the constitutional six months' term.

"It is my feeling that our equalizing fund should be extended so as to provide for the additional two months' term on a basis somewhat similar to that provided for the six months' term. If this is done taxes would be reduced materially in all of our rural special-tax districts which would affect a large majority of our rural population. The remaining rural sections, embracing twenty-four per cent of our rural children, operating now on only a six months' term, would have the assurance that they too can have the eight months' term without the very heavy tax burden that apparently now confronts them so seriously.

"The development of public education in North Carolina, when measured in terms of total operating costs, has been rapid and continuous for a period of 30 years. It has now reached a total of more than \$25,500,000. It is all spent, however, on our own people. It is an investment in youth and a guarantee of the future greatness of the state. This increased cost we are able to bear a much greater educational opportunity than was formerly provided for it, we are securing a greatly improved teaching service; we are giving instruction at public expense to 250,000 children; we are providing for the accommodation of more than 100,000 high school pupils; and, on an average, we are setting up an eight months' term for an additional 30,000 children each year, which is conclusive evidence that we are now rapidly and surely moving toward the eight months' school term which shall be our permanent goal.

"To be more definite, I favor continuing the state aid for the six months' term and substantial aid to a county which have voted the eight months' term for themselves and such others as may hereafter show the desire for a longer term, but I do not believe that it would be wise, at this time, to impose by legislative enactment an eight months' term upon the entire state. This is my sincere conviction after mature consideration and I believe this to be the safest and soundest policy for the permanent advancement of our educational interest. It has been truly said that a country's progress may be measured by those things once matters of debate which are now accepted as a matter of course. In this philosophy, I clearly see the wisdom of the eight months' term.

Carolina has made a wonderful beginning. Magnificent school buildings adorn every highway. They are a never-ending wonder to our visitors from other states. To and from these schools are transported 150,000 boys and girls each school day of the year—which array of youth constitutes North Carolina's finest and most valuable asset.

"While first consideration must and shall be given to the public schools—because they furnish the basis and ground work of our whole educational system, yet I realize the large place in our cultural life occupied and filled by our colleges and universities and I am not unfindful of their needs. (Continued on page three)

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We see better days ahead for this county in the very near future, but, in the meantime, we have set our prices so low it will pay every citizen of the county to visit our store when it becomes absolutely necessary to buy something for the family to eat and to wear.

An investigation of our prices will convince the most skeptical that we are satisfied with only the smallest margin of profit.

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