

INAUGURAL ADDRESS

THE HONORABLE TOMMY G. THOMPSON
STATE CAPITOL MADISON, WISCONSIN
MONDAY, JANUARY 5, 1987

CHIEF JUSTICE HEFFERNAN, MEMBERS OF THE SUPREME COURT, FORMER
GOVERNORS, CONSTITUTIONAL OFFICERS, LEGISLATORS, REVEREND
CLERGY, AND MOST IMPORTANTLY, THE PEOPLE OF WISCONSIN, THANK YOU
VERY MUCH FOR GIVING ME THIS, THE GREATEST PRIVILEGE AND HONOR
THAT A CITIZEN OF THIS GREAT STATE COULD EVER
HAVE.

POLITICIANS ARE NOT OFTEN ACCUSED OF BEING HUMBLE, BUT, RIGHT NOW
I FEEL VERY HUMBLE ... BUT ALSO VERY PROUD.

IT WAS TWENTY, YEARS AGO, AS A NEWLY ELECTED REPRESENTATIVE TO
THE ASSEMBLY, I WALKED UP THE MARBLE STEPS OF THE WEST WING OF
THIS MAGNIFICENT CAPITOL BUILDING, AND THERE WHERE I HAD ONCE
SERVED AS A PAGE, RAISED MY RIGHT HAND AND WAS SWORN IN AS A
LEGISLATOR TO BE OF SERVICE TO THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF
WISCONSIN.

Source: Marquette University Libraries; Tommy G. Thompson Collection; Series 2:
Gubernatorial Speeches.

I 'VE NEVER FORGOTTEN THE SHIVERS THAT MOVED UP MY SPINE THAT COLD DAY IN JANUARY, 1967, BUT, IT WASN'T THE WEATHER THAT MADE ME SHIVER. IT WAS THE REALIZATION THAT I'D BEEN GIVEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO BE OF SERVICE TO A GREAT PEOPLE, I TOLD MYSELF THAT I DIDN'T HAVE TO MOVE MOUNTAINS, BUT ONLY TO DO MY BEST, I TOLD MYSELF TO NEVER FORGET THAT IT WAS THE PEOPLE WHO HAD PUT ME THERE.

TODAY, AS I BECOME YOUR GOVERNOR, I ONCE AGAIN, HAVE THAT BODY AND MIND SHAKING SENSATION OF GREAT RESPONSIBILITY --IT IS A CHALLENGE I ACCEPT; A SACRED PUBLIC TRUST TO WHICH I WILL REMAIN FAITHFUL.

IT'S FULFILLMENT OF A DREAM, BUT ONLY PARTIAL FULFILLMENT; THE REST, EFFECTIVE SERVICE IN OFFICE.

I STAND BEFORE YOU TODAY THANKFUL, GRATEFUL, AND FULL OF HOPE AND OPTIMISM FOR THE FUTURE.

I'M THANKFUL TO MY FOLKS WHO INSPIRED ME AND PUSHED ME FORWARD. I WISH MY PARENTS COULD HAVE LIVED TO SEE THIS DAY. MY FATHER WAS A SMALL TOWN GROCER; MY MOTHER, A SCHOOL TEACHER, EACH HELPED FORGE IN ME THE BELIEF THAT SERVICE TO OTHERS IS THE GREATEST WORK OF LIFE.

Source: Marquette University Libraries; Tommy G. Thompson Collection; Series 2: Gubernatorial Speeches.

I'M GRATEFUL TO MY WIFE, SUE ANN AND OUR THREE CHILDREN, KELLI, TOMMI, AND JASON. FOR ME THEY HAVE BEEN A CONSTANT SOURCE OF SUPPORT AND INSPIRATION.

I AM GRATEFUL TO MY FRIENDS WHO JOINED WITH ME IN A GREAT CAMPAIGN EFFORT, A WONDERFUL VICTORY, AND NOW, A SPECIAL OPPORTUNITY TO SUCCESSFULLY AND EFFECTIVELY LEAD WISCONSIN. AND I AM GRATEFUL MOST OF ALL TO THE PEOPLE OF WISCONSIN, WHO HAVE CALLED ON ME TO DO THIS IMPORTANT WORK.

INTO MY HANDS HAS PASSED THE STEWARDSHIP OF A HERITAGE THAT IS UNRIVALED IN OUR LAND. WISCONSIN GOVERNMENT IS KNOWN NATIONWIDE FOR ITS INTEGRITY, COURAGE, AND PRUDENCE. GREAT WISCONSIN GOVERNORS HAVE BEEN A PART OF THIS, AND I WILL DO ALL I POSSIBLY CAN TO MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE THESE TRADITIONS OF QUALITY FOR OUR STATE.

THE GREATNESS OF WISCONSIN COMES FROM ITS NATURAL RESOURCES; THE ABUNDANCE OF BEAUTY, ITS WATER, WILDLIFE, AND ITS COUNTRY SIDE. ITS GREATNESS IS REFLECTED IN AN OUTSTANDING EDUCATION SYSTEM -- AT ALL LEVELS FROM KINDERGARTEN TO VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS TO GRADUATE PROGRAMS.

Source: Marquette University Libraries; Tommy G. Thompson Collection; Series 2: Gubernatorial Speeches.

BUT MOST OF ALL, THE GREATEST STRENGTH IN WISCONSIN IS YOU, THE PEOPLE. I KNOW OF NO PEOPLE WHO ARE MORE INNOVATIVE, MORE PRODUCTIVE, MORE CARING, MORE INDUSTRIOUS, THAN YOU, THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF WISCONSIN, AND THAT'S OUR GREATEST STRENGTH.

MY JOB DURING THESE NEXT 48 MONTHS WILL BE TO BUILD ON THAT QUALITY OF LIFE, TO NOT ONLY PROTECT IT BUT TO IMPROVE IT. THAT WILL BE MY GOAL AND MAY MY ADMINISTRATION BE JUDGED BY SUCCESS OF THAT GOAL.

IN THE 19TH CENTURY, JAMES FREEMAN CLARK SAID,

"A POLITICIAN THINKS OF THE NEXT ELECTION: A STATESMAN THINKS OF THE NEXT GENERATION."

I WAS REMINDED OF THIS ONLY LAST WEEK WHEN SOMEONE POINTED OUT THAT THE CHILDREN WHO BEGIN KINDERGARTEN IN 1987 WILL BE HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES BY THE YEAR 2000. THAT'S THE GENERATION FOR WHICH WE MUST ALL BE STATESMEN AND STATESWOMEN.

Source: Marquette University Libraries; Tommy G. Thompson Collection; Series 2: Gubernatorial Speeches.

I WANT ALL OF US IN BOTH POLITICAL PARTIES TO BE "STATESPERSONS" AS WE WORK TOGETHER TO MOVE WISCONSIN FORWARD. I'M EAGER TO WORK WITH ANYONE WHO HAS THAT SAME GOAL -- REPUBLICANS, DEMOCRATS, INDEPENDENTS, AND EVEN THE POLITICALLY APATHETIC.

AND AS WE BEGIN, I EXTEND MY HAND TO THOSE IN BOTH PARTIES TO DO MY BEST TO COOPERATE, TO LISTEN, AND TO WORK TOGETHER IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF THE STATE OF WISCONSIN.

NOW, I HAVE LONG BELIEVED THAT WE BENEFIT FROM HAVING TWO STRONG PARTIES.

BUT, I HAVE ALSO LONG BELIEVED THAT GOOD GOVERNMENT IS GOOD POLITICS AND THAT IS KNOWN, UNDERSTOOD, AND APPRECIATED IN WISCONSIN ON BOTH SIDES OF THE AISLE.

MOST OF THE CRITICAL ISSUES WE FACE CAN AND SHOULD BE DEALT WITH IN THE ABSENCE OF INTENSE PARTISANSHIP. MY LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM WILL BE DRAFTED WITH THAT IN MIND IN THE SAME WAY THAT THE APPOINTMENTS TO DATE IN OUR NEW ADMINISTRATION HAVE REFLECTED BIPARTISANSHIP.

Source: Marquette University Libraries; Tommy G. Thompson Collection; Series 2: Gubernatorial Speeches.

THAT'S THE KIND OF PARTNERSHIP, NOT PARTISANSHIP, WE NEED TODAY:
A PARTNERSHIP THAT CROSSES PARTY LINES THAT BRINGS TOGETHER
RURAL AND CITY PEOPLE, THAT HARMONIZES WITH PERSONS OF ALL RACES,
NATURAL ORIGINS, SEXES A PARTNERSHIP FOR ALL WISCONSIN.

I BELIEVE THAT TOGETHER WE FACE THREE CHALLENGES TODAY:

- THE CHALLENGE OF MAKING STATE GOVERNMENT MORE
COST-EFFICIENT AND COST-EFFECTIVE;
- THE CHALLENGE OF CREATING MORE JOBS FOR WISCONSIN, AND
- THE CHALLENGE OF PRESERVING OUR QUALITY OF LIFE AS
FAMILIES, NEIGHBORS, AND FRIENDS IN THIS GREAT STATE.

THESE ARE THE PRIORITIES OF MY ADMINISTRATION.

GOVERNMENTS TAKE FREEDOM AWAY FROM PEOPLE PRIMARILY IN TWO WAYS;
THEY TAKE AWAY OUR PERSONAL FREEDOM WITH TOO MANY RULES AND
REGULATIONS, AND, THEY TAKE AWAY OUR ECONOMIC FREEDOM WITH TOO
MANY TAXES.

WHAT I'M SAYING IS THAT WE MUST DECREASE THE ROLE THAT GOVERNMENT
PLAYS IN OUR LIVES. A GOOD WAY TO START IS TO SHORTEN THE REACH
OF GOVERNMENT INTO OUR POCKETBOOKS.

Source: Marquette University Libraries; Tommy G. Thompson Collection; Series 2: Gubernatorial Speeches.

OUR FINANCES ARE LIMITED: WE ALL KNOW THIS - BUT, WE MUST ALSO REALIZE THERE IS NO LIMIT TO THE NEW IDEAS WE CAN HAVE TO HELP EACH OTHER TO STIMULATE GROWTH, AND BUILD A BETTER WISCONSIN.

IT ISN'T HIGHER TAXES OR MORE SPENDING THAT WE NEED. IT'S FRESHER IDEAS AND HEIGHTENED CREATIVITY.

THE SECOND CHALLENGE WE FACE IS THE CHALLENGE OF CREATING MORE JOBS FOR WISCONSIN. IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND JOB CREATION, WE MUST BECOME HUNGRY AGAIN. WE CAN'T SIMPLY BE PROUD OF OUR HISTORY.

OUR PRIORITIES MUST BE:

- THE RETENTION AND GROWTH OF BUSINESSES THAT ALREADY EXIST IN WISCONSIN;
- THE ENCOURAGEMENT OF NEW BUSINESS IDEAS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP, AND;
- THE FORGING OF NEW INTERNATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS,

Source: Marquette University Libraries; Tommy G. Thompson Collection; Series 2: Gubernatorial Speeches.

TODAY, WE LIVE IN A GLOBAL, NOT MERELY A NATIONAL ECONOMY. WE MUST SELL MORE OF OUR PRODUCTS ABROAD AND ATTRACT MORE FOREIGN CAPITAL TO US. IN 1970, 10 PERCENT OF AMERICA'S GROSS NATIONAL PRODUCT WAS PRODUCED BY INTERNATIONAL TRADE. BY 1995, THAT FIGURE WILL CLIMB TO AS MUCH AS ONE-THIRD. THAT'S WHY WE MUST CHANGE OUR ATTITUDE AND OURSELVES AS PLAYERS IN WORLD MARKETS, NOT JUST NATIONAL ONES.

WHENEVER WE CONSIDER NEW LAWS, WE MUST ASK THIS QUESTION, "WILL IT HELP CREATE NEW JOBS OR WILL IT PUSH JOBS AWAY FROM WISCONSIN?"

AND WE MUST RECOGNIZE THERE IS NOTHING INCOMPATIBLE WITH MORE JOBS AND BETTER BUSINESS AND A CLEAN ENVIRONMENT.

A CLEAN ENVIRONMENT IS GOOD BUSINESS; BUT IT ALSO CREATES A QUALITY OF LIFE IMPORTANT TO US ALL, WHETHER WE HUNT AND FISH OR WATCH BIRDS, OR HIKE, OR JUST RIDE THROUGH SOME OF OUR GREAT WISCONSIN COUNTRYSIDE. IT'S A PRICELESS HERITAGE WHICH WE OWE TO OUR CHILDREN AND TO THOSE CHILDREN OF WHOM I SPOKE EARLIER WHO WILL BE ENTERING KINDERGARTEN THIS FALL.

Source: Marquette University Libraries; Tommy G. Thompson Collection; Series 2: Gubernatorial Speeches.

THE THIRD CHALLENGE WE FACE IS TO PRESERVE OUR QUALITY OF LIFE AS FAMILIES, NEIGHBORS, AND FRIENDS IN THIS GREAT STATE.

THE FAMILY IS THE BASIC STRUCTURE OF OUR FREE SOCIETY. IT MUST BE SUPPORTED, PRESERVED, AND CELEBRATED. GOVERNMENT ITSELF IS ACTUALLY AN OUTGROWTH OF THE FAMILY STRUCTURE, AND THE IMPORTANCE OF OUR FAMILIES AND OUR CHILDREN CANNOT BE OVER-EMPHASIZED.

MY GOAL AS GOVERNOR WILL BE TO JOIN THE OTHER LEADERSHIP OF THIS STATE IN MOVING WISCONSIN FORWARD DURING THESE FOUR YEARS. OUR PEOPLE MUST HAVE THE ELEVATOR OF OPPORTUNITY TO ENABLE THEM TO REACH THEIR FULL POTENTIAL FOR PRODUCTIVITY AND HAPPINESS, REGARDLESS OF RACE," OR NATIONAL ORIGIN, SEX, OR OTHER EXTRANEIOUS CONSIDERATIONS.

THIS ADMINISTRATION WILL BE AGGRESSIVE IN ITS EFFORTS TO FIND SOLUTIONS FOR THE CHALLENGES FACING WISCONSIN.

WE WILL HAVE THE COURAGE TO MAKE THE DIFFICULT DECISIONS WHICH CONSTITUTE STRONG AND RESPONSIBLE LEADERSHIP.

Source: Marquette University Libraries; Tommy G. Thompson Collection; Series 2: Gubernatorial Speeches.

WE WILL ATTACK EXCESSES AND UNNECESSARY DUPLICATION IN STATE GOVERNMENT IN ORDER TO REDUCE TAXES AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE.

FEWER DOLLARS FROM WASHINGTON ARE LIKELY AND THE BEST POSSIBLE WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH OUR CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION AND THE STATE'S MUNICIPALITIES WILL BE IMPERATIVE.

THE PRODUCTIVITY OF OUR PROGRAMS IN STATE GOVERNMENT AND THE PEOPLE IMPLEMENTING THEM WILL TAKE ON NEW MEANING AS WE FACE EVER INCREASING DEMANDS ON VERY LIMITED RESOURCES.

OUR HIGHEST PRIORITY WILL BE JOBS; MORE JOBS, BETTER JOBS, AND MOST IMPORTANTLY SECURE JOBS FOR WISCONSIN WORKERS.

THE UNEMPLOYED AND THE UNDER EMPLOYED REMAIN WISCONSIN'S GREATEST UNTAPPED RESOURCE, WE MUST HELP THOSE WHO LACK EMPLOYMENT TO FIND IT. AND, WE MUST ASSIST THOSE WHO ARE NOT WORKING NEAR THEIR CAPACITY TO ATTAIN THE OPPORTUNITIES THEY SEEK.

WE WILL WORK TO MAKE WISCONSIN A LEADER IN JOB CREATION AND JOB RETENTION AND NOT IN STATE SPENDING AND TAXATION.

Source: Marquette University Libraries; Tommy G. Thompson Collection; Series 2: Gubernatorial Speeches.

OUR BUSINESS CLIMATE SIMPLY ISN'T WHAT IT SHOULD BE, IT MAKES LITTLE SENSE TO POINT FINGERS TO LEVEL BLAME. WHAT IS IMPORTANT IS AN AGENDA OF REMEDIES; WE WILL FIGHT FOR A STATE GOVERNMENT THAT IS PRO-BUSINESS AND PRO-WORKER; WE WILL FIGHT FOR A STATE GOVERNMENT DETERMINED TO PROVIDE EQUITY FOR THE EMPLOYER AND THE EMPLOYEE, THE FAMILY, THE FARMERS, THE ELDERLY, THE HANDICAPPED, AND THE DISADVANTAGED.

SAID ANOTHER WAY, I WANT THE PEOPLE OF WISCONSIN TO BE ABLE TO SAY, MY ADMINISTRATION "CARES." YES, MADISON WILL LISTEN, RESPOND, AND WILL HELP IF POSSIBLE, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN. IT IS A TALL ORDER INDEED.

WE MUST BE WILLING TO BE BOLD AND TODAY I SHARE WITH YOU THE ADVICE OF LINCOLN.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN SAID, "THE DOGMAS OF THE QUIET PAST ARE INADEQUATE TO THE STORMY PRESENT, WE MUST THINK ANEW AND ACT ANEW."

AND SO MY FELLOW CITIZENS, I WANT YOUR HELP; I NEED YOUR HELP AND YOUR PRAYERS.

Source: Marquette University Libraries; Tommy G. Thompson Collection; Series 2: Gubernatorial Speeches.

IF WE JOIN, FOUR MILLION STRONG, ABLY REPRESENTED AS YOU ARE BY YOUR OUTSTANDING LEGISLATORS, WE CAN MOVE, WE MUST MOVE, AS OUR STATE'S MOTTO INSTRUCTS US, "FORWARD."

"FORWARD" TO AN EVEN BETTER STATE; STRONGER, MORE BEAUTIFUL; EFFECTIVELY GOVERNED, WHERE EACH OF US CAN DREAM GREAT DREAMS, STRETCH OUR MINDS AND OUR DETERMINATION, AND ACCOMPLISH ABSOLUTELY ANYTHING WE REACH HIGH ENOUGH AND HARD ENOUGH TO OBTAIN, WISCONSIN'S WONDERFUL QUALITY OF LIFE IS OURS TO MAINTAIN, PROTECT, AND IMPROVE.

WE HAVE IT IN OUR POWER TO FORMULATE OUR PURPOSE AND TO DETERMINE OUR DIRECTION.

WHAT WE DO WILL SHAPE OUR FUTURE.

FOR WISCONSIN, FOR EACH OF US, OUR FUTURE IS UNLIMITED ...

I WELCOME THE OPPORTUNITY TO HELP SHAPE IT ...

...WITH NEW LEADERSHIP

...WITH SOUND GOVERNMENT

...AND WITH RENEWED HOPE AND SPIRIT.

Source: Marquette University Libraries; Tommy G. Thompson Collection; Series 2:
Gubernatorial Speeches.

TOGETHER, WE CAN MAKE OUR GREAT STATE, EVEN BETTER!