Lieutenant Governor Elthon, President of the Senate, presiding,

presented Governor Hoegh, who delivered the following inaugural address:

GOVERNOR ELTHON, MR. PRESIDENT, MR. SPEAKER, MR. CHIEF JUSTICE, SENATORS, REPRESENTATIVES, STATE OFFICIALS, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

You, the members of the Fifty-sixth General Assembly, and I, as your Governor, are dedicated to serve the people of Iowa. Together, we accept the responsibilities and trust placed in us by the people of our great state. With the help and guidance of Almighty God, I pray we will have the wisdom and understanding which will prove equal to their faith in us.

To be your Governor is an honor—and a challenge—and a public trust. In all humility I accept the responsibilities of this great office.

I have served with many of you in this beautiful chamber. As a former legislator I learned to respect and appreciate the pre-eminent place of the legislature in our republican form of government. You are here to interpret the people’s will and to enact into laws that which is good for all Iowa. I consider it an honor and a privilege to counsel, cooperate and work with you to this end. The formulation and passage of legislation is the sacred province of the elected representatives of the people. It is my duty to suggest—not to direct.

Iowa is a great state. We have the finest people, the most fertile and productive land, excellent communities, schools and churches, many of the world’s largest industries, and above all, clean and honest government.

We are indebted to those who provided for us that which is right.

Under the able guidance of the late beloved Governor Beardsley our state administration has efficiently and courageously handled the administrative, fiscal and law enforcement problems. Governor Beardsley was one of our great governors. We are indebted to him for his tireless efforts and leadership for the betterment of Iowa. His untimely death was a tragic loss to Iowa. To Mrs. Beardsley and her family we extend our prayers and hope for their future comfort. We are grateful to Governor Elthon for successfully executing the tasks that were so suddenly his responsibility. In behalf of the people of Iowa, we extend thanks to him for a difficult duty, well performed.

We have the responsibility of carrying on—to face the future with the confidence of our forebears, in building an even greater Iowa.

Twelve years ago, dressed in khaki, I last stood in this chamber. We were then at war. How grateful I am to be here today, in time of peace. Our great President, Dwight D. Eisenhower, contributed mightily to gaining the peace. His life today is dedicated to the preservation of this peace, and to the maintenance of a prosperous and free America.

His leadership serves as an inspiration for all.

EDUCATION

The destiny of Iowa and our country will soon be in the hands of our children of today. Well educated children are not only Iowa’s greatest assets, but they are the bulwark of a free America. We should therefore consider a problem for bettering their education as our number one objective. To meet this challenge I suggest:

1. State aid for schools on the basis of twenty-five per cent, with the specific understanding that schools must remain under local control, and with more emphasis on wise expenditures and efficiency of administration.

2. A teacher education and certification program to assure every classroom of a well trained and highly qualified teacher.

3. A school district reorganization program controlled at the local level, to provide adequate facilities and able instruction in all school units and to effect economies in maintenance and operation. Your attention is called to the recommendations of the state board of public instruction in the matter of amending the school district reorganization law.

4. Appropriations for Iowa’s higher educational institutions sufficient to maintain leadership in education and research.

We must plan now to take care of our increased enrollment in all levels of education. While it may require some additional classrooms, we must first be certain that we make full use of our present facilities. In some respects, industry has set a good example for us to study.

I take this opportunity to pay tribute to the teachers in our schools and colleges, whose sacrifices and devotion have contributed so much to free government.

HIGHWAYS

Iowa, as an agricultural and industrial state, requires a balanced highway program. In devising our program we always consider the need for good arterial roads, farm to market roads, and local secondary roads.

Iowa has one of the largest and best secondary road networks in the nation—92,778 miles—a vast primary system of 8,600 miles, city and town streets of 10,200 miles, all needed to serve our great state.

Uppermost in the minds of all of us is highway safety. If we want safer roads—and there is ample evidence that wide roads with good sight distance are safer roads—it will be necessary to undertake a highway widening program of great magnitude. Death curves and death bridges must be eliminated. Improved sight distance is needed in many places. Iowa cannot afford inferior highways that invite death.

The legislature in 1949 wisely adopted a long range pay as you go highway program. Since then, our unprecedented traffic increase, the need for more adequate standards of construction, the upward spiral of road costs, the rising demand for safer and more serviceable highways, have placed this program behind schedule.

We have the responsibility to provide the improved roads the motorists of Iowa deserve. Iowa doesn’t need elaborate roads, but it does need adequate roads.

To accelerate our road program, additional funds will be necessary. It should be carried out on a pay as you go basis. I urge a one-cent increase in the present gas tax rate and that the one-cent tax enacted by the Fifty-fifth General Assembly be made permanent. Let me assure you that the money which you authorize for this essential road program will be wisely spent.

Many miles of toll roads are being built in other states. Illinois to the east and Nebraska to the west have already established toll road authorities. Illinois initiates its toll road construction program this year. I suggest that you give immediate consideration to such a program so that Iowa may join its sister states in binding the East to the West. Such a program should be self liquidating and be financed solely through tolls paid by the actual users.

TRAFFIC SAFETY

The people of Iowa look to us for an effective traffic safety program.

We must take immediate action to reduce the murder on our highways.

I suggest the following:

1. Modernize our roads.

2. Establish fixed speed limits.

3. Strictly enforce our safety regulations.

4. Constantly stress safety education.

5. Encourage more instruction and training to improve our driving.

6. Increase the number of patrolmen on our highways, to be financed by an increase in driver and chauffeur licenses.

7. Strengthen our laws on vehicle inspection and on issuance and revocation of driver’s license.

8. Emphasize the need for individual driver responsibility.

AGRICULTURE

Iowa is a great farm state. Yes, the record is conclusive—Iowa is the number one farm state. With the skill and technical ability of our farmers and with our rich soil, Iowa leads the nation in farm income. We produce seventeen per cent of the corn, fifteen per cent of the oats, nineteen per cent of the hogs and market ten per cent of the beef of the United States. Iowa is truly the breadbasket of America. We fully recognize that not only Iowa’s prosperity, but that of our nation, is dependent upon a sound, stable and prosperous agriculture. The God-given new wealth produced each year from our soil is the very life blood of our economy.

Iowa is dependent upon its soil. We must therefore continue to encourage proper care of our greatest resource. Through expanded educational programs we can make great strides in the adoption of sound methods and techniques.

Through an expanded state water shed program, in conjunction with the federal government, we can attack the problems of upstream soil and water conservation and flood prevention.

Through tax credit for conservation expenditures similar to that enacted by the last federal congress, we can give further encouragement to the preservation of our resources.

We should examine our standards of quality and processing of our agricultural products to assure that Iowa’s products receive their fair share on the markets. For example, it’s apparent that a uniform egg grading law for retail purposes is needed in Iowa. Iowa eggs are the best and will command a premium at the market when properly identified by a uniform grading program. Giving the consumer quality eggs is good business and will benefit the producer by an increased price with no burden to the consumer. Another example—Iowa is one of the few states that does not have a marketing division in its Department of Agriculture to study marketing, transportation and consumption of farm products. Such a division would likewise benefit our farm economy.

We must assure the free flow of agricultural products into and out of Iowa, and place only such restrictions on these movements as are necessary to control disease and protect the health of our citizens.

A few years ago the legislature wisely established the agricultural land tax credit law in order to equalize property taxes for education.

It is to the best interest of all Iowa that our property taxes be equitable to agriculture. To this end and in the interest of providing a financial incentive to school reorganization we should increase the appropriation for such a fund in order that all claims may be paid in full.

Right this minute the farmer’s problem is not on the farm, but in the channels of trade after his products leave the farm. We must therefore expand research in marketing, production, distribution and industrial use of our farm products.

INDUSTRY

As you know, in the last decade the rural population of Iowa has decreased because of more efficient methods in production. Each year 6,000 young Iowans graduate from our colleges and 24,000 from our high schools. It is therefore imperative for the future growth of Iowa that additional job opportunities are created.

In 1945 you wisely created the Iowa Development Commission to promote our state. Since then Iowa has attracted over 860 new industries, which brought us one-half billion dollars in capital investment, 35,000 jobs with an annual payroll in excess of 120 million dollars, resulting in a 225 million dollar increase in purchasing power each year.

However, we have only scratched the surface. Now that industry is decentralizing, and is moving into the great midwest preparatory to using the facilities of the St. Lawrence Seaway, Iowa must leave nothing undone to attract industry within its borders. With what we have to offer Iowa can double its new industries within the next four years.

I therefore urge that the activities of the Iowa Development Commission be immediately expanded.

Let me assure you that as your Governor I will render tireless service in the development and growth of our state. All of us should join in the selling of Iowa. With our skilled technicians, our good people, our abundance of natural resources and utility and power facilities, and our fine communities, Iowa is the most attractive state in the nation.

Iowa is America’s bread basket, but Iowa can also be America’s work shop.

LABOR

Industrial development in Iowa is increasing and we anticipate further expansion in the immediate future. The advancement of the health, safety and welfare of the working men and women in Iowa is therefore essential.

Economic conditions, such as an increase in wages and cost of living, require us to reexamine our present laws, in order that this important segment of our economic life is assured of progress. I therefore make the following recommendations:

1. That the unemployment compensation benefits be extended to twenty-six weeks of unemployment, and that the maximum weekly payments be substantially increased. The present “voluntary quit” law should be amended, so that an employee does not lose all his past wage credits because he quits one job.

2. That the schedule of workmen’s compensation benefits be readjusted and increased. Compensation to the injured, and to the survivors of those who lose their lives in the course of employment, should be commensurate with today’s wages and cost of living.

3. That the bureau of labor be made effective to better serve Iowa, and that our safety, sanitary and child labor laws be strengthened.

4. That the distinction between the requirements for authorization of check-off of union dues and deductions for other purposes be removed.

5. That the principle of free collective bargaining be maintained, by permitting management and labor to agree upon a union shop if they so desire.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Honesty and integrity in government—those are old words and old phrases. They mean nothing unless they are implemented with action.

We, who have been associated with the state government of Iowa, are proud of the honesty and integrity with which state affairs have been conducted. We are proud of the fact that unswerving law enforcement has been part of the state government’s policy.

Strict and impartial enforcement of all the laws enacted by the legislature will be the cornerstone of this administration.

WELFARE

One of the most heart rending problems is the proper care and treatment of the mentally ill, the dependent and crippled children, the handicapped, the aged, blind and deaf, and those in need of medical and financial assistance. During the past few years, great progress has been made in this service. However, constant improvement must be our goal.

Recently the United States Congress increased social security payments to many of our citizens. Recipients of old age assistance were denied this increase because of certain technicalities. This should be corrected.

GOVERNMENT

In Iowa, we firmly believe that government closest to the people makes the best government. I am certain you feel as strongly as I do that local control of local matters is vital. I recommend your continuing effort in strengthening and making more efficient our local government.

For equitable representation the voice of all the people must be heard in our legislative chambers. One of the basic concepts of our republic is that of representation on both an area and a population basis as exemplified in the United States Congress. I, therefore, recommend an amendment to the constitution reapportioning the Senate on a population basis and the House on an area basis.

The terms of our state and county elective officials are too short. A four-year term would mean more efficiency and better government.

Iowa’s young people of today are the best informed and most intelligent in our history. I think enough of today’s young people to recommend that the minimum voting age in this state be lowered to eighteen years.

I’m certain if they are given this important responsibility that they will respond. About half of our present voters did not go to the polls on November 2. If the eighteen-year-olds had the power of voting, it could well be that a greater portion of those twenty-one and over would be stimulated to vote in future elections.

After my short service in state government I have reached the conclusion that more adequate pay for the elected and other key governmental officials will make for better government. Our elected state officials should receive $10,000; our supreme court justices $15,000; our district court judges $10,000 and the other positions proportionately thereto.

Your own compensation is too low, as is that of the Lieutenant Governor and the Speaker of the House. I’m not urging a spending spree—instead I’m urging you to make it possible for our good citizens to serve in public office without undue sacrifice.

For example—only six states pay the judges of their highest court less, and only eight states pay their district court judges less than does Iowa. In order that our legal talent may accept judgeships without financial sacrifice, the judiciary should be paid salaries that are adequate.

Your attorney general, with the assistance of your interim committee and the county attorneys and clerks, made a detailed survey of the work load in Iowa’s judicial districts. Some valuable statistics were compiled. They show that there is a need for a more exacting and continuous type of survey.

The objective of our judicial system is to accomplish justice, with promptness and with minimum cost to the public and the suitors. To obtain effective administration of our judicial system there must be some continuing organization to gather statistics, make studies and fact finding surveys of all our courts. Many states and the federal government have such a system, resulting in making the courts more efficient and lowering the costs. I, therefore, recommend that you establish a statistician in the judicial department under the supervision of the supreme court to gather and analyze such facts. Only in this manner can we obtain the correct answers to the questions:

Are there too many different courts?

Are there too many or too few judges?

Is there need for redistricting of our courts?

Is there need for an integrated court structure?

The cost of this service should be borne by those who use the courts, through a $1 increase of district court filing fees. This would provide about $20,000 annually, which is sufficient to finance this vital project.

Every two years you face the tremendous task of keeping our laws up to date and enacting new legislation for the betterment of Iowa.

Many times difficult decisions must be made by you without enough facts at hand. I therefore recommend that you establish a legislative research council to perform this important role.

VETERANS

The men and women of Iowa who served in our armed forces during the Korean War should be given the same bonus and tax exemptions as provided for the veterans of other wars. As veterans they have rendered a special service to our state and nation.

TAXATION

Property taxes are now at the saturation point. The State of Iowa years ago showed good judgment by abandoning the property tax as a source of state revenue. The state is using income, sales and other taxes to support its functions and to relieve the burden on the local property taxpayer.

There are many inequities in our present tax structure. Our people recognize that governmental services cost money, and they expect us as their servants to make certain that taxes are levied fairly and justly, commensurate with ability to pay. For these reasons, I urge that you select a special committee to make a thorough examination and study of our whole tax structure. This survey should include assessment of all classes of property and all phases of taxation.

The people of Iowa desire that their state be a leader. I’m confident they are willing to invest their fair share to build a greater Iowa. Increases in taxes are not popular, but we must have the courage to provide the revenue needed for the essential services of the state.

First, we must exhaust every possible means of getting more for our present tax dollar. Let me assure you that we in the executive and administrative branch of government will diligently work toward the end of giving the people of Iowa full value for their tax dollar. We will constantly work for more efficient and economical administration of state functions and services.

To eliminate duplication and to establish efficiency and economy in administration I suggest the following consolidations:

1. Place all fire inspection responsibilities under the state fire marshal, as recommended by your budget and financial control committee.

2. Place enforcement of the laws pertaining to commercial vehicle weights (now under the highway commission), gas tax (now under the state treasurer), motor carrier tax and supervision (now under the commerce commission), under one department.

3. Place the parole functions of the board of control over state charges at Eldora and Mitchellville under the board of parole.

4. Examine all of our inspection functions with the view of consolidating those which are feasible.

5. Place all legal advisors to state departments such as now exists in the insurance department, commerce commission, the board of public instruction, and the employment security commission under the supervision of the attorney general.

Secondly, we should improve collection of income, sales and use taxes now imposed by law by more vigorous action.

Third, require that claims for soldier’s exemption of property from taxation be filed annually.

Fourth, tighten the homestead credit law as recommended by the state tax commission.

Fifth, adopt the changes in the sales and use tax laws recommended by the state tax commission.

Sixth, tax capital gains similar to the federal law.

BUDGET

It is our responsibility to see that our state government operates on a well managed fiscal basis. There must be no deficit spending.

The difficult budget problem is under intensive study. It is my expectation to present for your consideration by the first week in February a detailed outline of the financial and taxation needs of our state.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, I thank you for this opportunity to make suggestions for our future needs. Note that they are only suggestions. I have full confidence in your judgment. It will be a pleasure and a rich experience to work with you. Your counsel and cooperation will be most welcome at all times. One factor is beyond dispute: Your actions will be guided by what is good for all Iowa. And now, may God lead us in the accomplishment of this objective.

The State University of Iowa Chamber Singers offered the following vocal selections: ‘‘No Man Is An Island” and “Battle Hymn of the Republic.”

Governor Leo A. Hoegh was escorted from the chamber by the committee previously appointed.