

I N A U G U R A L A D D R E S S

G O V E R N O R R U D Y P E R P I C H

D E L I V E R E D A T H I B B I N G H I G H S C H O O L

H I B B I N G , M I N N E S O T A

J A N U A R Y 3 , 1 9 8 3

E M B A R G O E D

F O R 1 0 A . M .

J A N U A R Y 3 , 1 9 8 3

JUSTICE WAHL ...

TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATION OF HIBBING HIGH SCHOOL ...

HONORED FORMER TEACHERS ...

MEMBERS OF MY FAMILY ...

STUDENTS AND FRIENDS ...

IT'S GOOD TO BE BACK HERE, WITHIN THESE WALLS, WITH MANY FAMILIAR
FACES.

YOU MAY HAVE HEARD THAT I'M NOT WINNING ANY PRIZES FROM THE
NEWSPAPERS FOR TAKING MY OATH OF OFFICE IN HIBBING.

THAT'S OK. I'VE BEEN WELL TREATED IN THE LAST TWO MONTHS, AND
ANYONE WHO MAKES DECISIONS IN GOVERNMENT LEARNS TO EXPECT CRITICISM.
ANYHOW, THIS IS SUPPOSED TO BE THE TIME FOR A POLITICAL HONEYMOON
FOR THE NEW GOVERNOR -- IT'S NOT UNTIL THE SECOND DAY IN OFFICE
THAT THEY COME AFTER YOU WITH A SHOTGUN.

I CHOSE HIBBING HIGH SCHOOL FOR MY INAUGURATION -- MY HIGH
SCHOOL -- FOR A VERY SPECIAL REASON. I WANT TO TALK TODAY ABOUT
EDUCATION -- AND I WANT MY MESSAGE TO BE HEARD BY STUDENTS.

IT'S NOT MY INTENTION TO MOVE THE STATE CAPITOL TO THE RANGE -- BUT IT IS MY INTENTION TO INSURE THAT ALL OF MINNESOTA'S STUDENTS RECEIVE THE SAME HIGH QUALITY EDUCATION I RECEIVED IN THIS HIGH SCHOOL.

HIBBING HIGH SCHOOL HAS MANY HONORS OVER THE YEARS, AND I'M PLEASED TO HONOR THE SCHOOL WITH THIS CEREMONY. THIS EVENT IS BEING HELD HERE BECAUSE I WANT TO CONVEY AN IDEA -- THAT THERE IS SOMETHING VERY STRONG WHICH TIES US TOGETHER TODAY -- PEOPLE LIKE ME WHO GRADUATED FROM THIS SCHOOL IN 1946 AND PEOPLE LIKE YOU WHO WILL VERY SOON COME INTO ADULTHOOD.

YOU ARE THE ONES WHO WILL HAVE TO PAY FOR THE MISTAKES WE MAKE, OR FOR THE MISTAKES YOU MAKE YOURSELVES IF YOU'RE GOING TO LET OTHER PEOPLE VOTE AND PICK THE CANDIDATES WHILE YOU WATCH TELEVISION.

SO I'M GOING TO TALK ABOUT THE POLITICAL PROCESS -- AND URGE YOU TO TAKE PART. AND I'M GOING TO TALK ABOUT SCHOOLS, TEACHERS, PARENTS AND STUDENTS -- AND WHAT IT IS THAT WE ALL NEED TO DO TO INSURE A BRIGHT FUTURE FOR MINNESOTA.

* * *

LET ME PAUSE HERE TO RECOGNIZE SOME VERY SPECIAL PEOPLE IN THIS AUDIENCE. THERE ARE A NUMBER OF MY FORMER TEACHERS AND MY WIFE'S FORMER TEACHERS HERE. SOME ARE IN THEIR 70'S AND 80'S, AND IT WAS BIT DIFFICULT FOR THEM TO BE HERE TODAY. BUT I AM SO PROUD THAT I CAN STAND BEFORE THEM AND TELL THEM WITH ALL MY HEART -- THANK YOU.

(GOVERNOR ASKS FORMER TEACHERS TO STAND, LEADS
IN APPLAUSE.) (ADD ANY ANECDOTES ABOUT HIGH
SCHOOL DAYS.)

WE HAD A REMARKABLE PARTNERSHIP IN THIS SCHOOL. THE MINING COMPANIES PAID 90 PERCENT OF THE COST, BUT THEY RECOGNIZED THE NEED FOR EDUCATION. OUR PARENTS WERE STRONG PARTNERS WITH THE TEACHERS -- THERE WAS SUPPORT THAT SEEMS TO BE MISSING TODAY.

I NEVER DARED TO SAY A BAD WORD ABOUT MY TEACHERS -- I WAS AFRAID THEY'D TATTLE ON ME, AND JUSTICE MIGHT HAVE BEEN ADMINISTERED WITH A STRAP IN THE HANDS OF MY PARENTS.

WE DIDN'T HAVE A BOOK AT HOME, BUT THERE WAS NOT ONLY A GREAT LIBRARY IN THIS SCHOOL BUT A BOOKMOBILE THAT BROUGHT A LIBRARY ON WHEELS TO THE LABORING DISTRICTS. AND I USED IT. SO THERE WAS THE PARTNERSHIP -- TAXPAYERS WHO PROVIDED FINE FACILITIES -- TEACHERS WILLING AND ABLE TO TEACH -- PARENTS STANDING IN FULL SUPPORT OF THE SCHOOL. FOR ME, THAT PARTNERSHIP HELPED TRANSFORM A KID WHO COULDN'T SPEAK ENGLISH IN KINDERGARTEN INTO A GROWN-UP ABLE TO DEAL FACE-TO-FACE WITH GOVERNMENT LEADERS, LABOR LEADERS, HEADS OF CORPORATIONS AND LEADERS OF FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS.

* * *

NOW, WE MUST MOVE ALONG AND TALK ABOUT TODAY. ON WEDNESDAY, I WILL DELIVER A "STATE OF THE STATE" MESSAGE TO THE LEGISLATURE IN ST. PAUL. IT'S NO SECRET WHAT MY MESSAGE WILL BE -- THE STATE OF THE STATE IS NOT GOOD. BUT IT IS NOT A TIME FOR WRINGING OF HANDS AND ARGUING WHO'S TO BLAME.

MY GENERATION WENT THROUGH A DEPRESSION. IT WAS A GUT-WRENCHING TIME THAT NONE OF US WILL EVER FORGET.

THE LINES OF JOBLESS PEOPLE HAVE RETURNED HERE TO THE IRON RANGE IN THE 1980s, AND TO MANY OTHER PARTS OF AMERICA AS WELL.

IT'S THE WORST KIND OF SITUATION FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE PROUD OF THE WORK THEY DO. IT WRECKS DREAMS AND PLANS, AND TAKES AWAY PEOPLE'S INDEPENDENCE. WE MUST FEEL RAGE THAT PEOPLE ARE FORCED INTO FOOD LINES, YET AT THE SAME TIME WE MUST JOIN IN GIVING THANKS TO INDIVIDUALS AND COMPANIES WHO HAVE PROVIDED SUPPLIES FOR THE EMERGENCY FOOD SHELVES.

YET, WE MUST REFLECT ON WHAT IT IS THAT WRECKS THE DREAMS OF PEOPLE WHO WANT TO WORK, PEOPLE WHO HAVE KIDS TO FEED, PEOPLE WHO PRIZE THEIR INDEPENDENCE. LAYING BLAME WON'T HELP.

WE'LL SURVIVE AND WORK OUR WAY OUT.

BUT IN THE PROCESS THERE WILL BE CHANGES -- IN THE WAY WE KEEP OUR TOWNS AND THE STATE GOING, AND IN THE WAY WE RUN OUR SCHOOLS. SOME OF THOSE CHANGES WILL CAUSE PAIN AND WILL DEMAND COURAGE.

I'M TALKING ABOUT COMBINING SOME SCHOOLS, CHANGING THE WAY WE HEAT OUR PUBLIC BUILDINGS AND CHANGING THE WAY WE LOOK AT OUR FUTURE. WE MUST REALIZE THAT HERE ON THE IRON RANGE, FOR EXAMPLE, THE OLD PRODUCTION FIGURES WILL NOT COME BACK. CHANGE IS COMING.

BUT WE DON'T HAVE TO LET CHANGE FRIGHTEN US. THE CRITICAL THING IS THAT WE SHOULD BE ON TOP OF IT AND MANAGE CHANGE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF ALL OUR PEOPLE.

CHANGE IS COMING WHETHER WE'RE READY OR NOT. WE HAVE A HISTORY OF BEING INNOVATIVE IN MINNESOTA -- I WANT TO SEE THAT REPUTATION SHARPENED AND HONED, AND IN THE PROCESS TO FIND OPPORTUNITIES FOR OUR PEOPLE.

THIS IS NOT THE TIME TO SAY WE CAN'T AFFORD ANY MORE INNOVATION. WE CAN'T AFFORD TO IGNORE THE NEED FOR INNOVATION.

THAT BRINGS ME TO SCHOOLS.

FORTY YEARS AGO THE COUNTRY WAS ALMOST PARALYZED FOR EIGHT OR TEN YEARS. THEY HAD SOUP KITCHENS -- MEN SELLING APPLES ON THE CORNER -- BANKS GOING BROKE -- MORTGAGES BEING FORECLOSED -- DESPAIR EVERYWHERE.

THE FIGURES ARE BAD TODAY. BUT CONDITIONS AREN'T THAT DESPERATE BECAUSE SOME PEOPLE IN GOVERNMENT HAD THE GOOD SENSE TO BUILD IN SOME SAFEGUARDS AGAINST THE ECONOMIC HARD TIMES. NOT IT'S OUR TURN -- YOURS AND MINE -- TO BUILD IN SOME SAFEGUARDS FOR THE NEXT GENERATIONS.

WHAT I'M TRYING TO SAY IS THAT OUR SCHOOLS -- AND THE STUDENTS IN THEM -- MUST BE THE FOUNDATION OF THE FUTURE, NOT THE CRINGING HOSTAGE OF THE PAST.

A FEW YEARS AGO WE HEARD SOME BACKSTAGE COMMENTS ABOUT THE TIMES BEING SO TOUGH THAT WE COULDN'T AFFORD EQUALIZED EDUCATION, AND THAT IT WAS INEVITABLE FOR THE RICHER DISTRICTS TO FORGE AHEAD OF THE OTHERS.

WE FOUGHT AND WON THAT BATTLE YEARS AGO. WE CAN'T RETREAT NOW. MINNESOTA'S SCHOOLS ARE AMONG THE BEST IN THE COUNTRY. OUR YOUNG PEOPLE CAN COMPETE ON A PAR WITH YOUNG PEOPLE FROM OTHER PARTS OF THE COUNTRY.

AS A RESULT, MINNESOTA HAS BEEN IN THE FOREFRONT FOR YEARS IN MEDICINE, IN EDUCATION, IN THE BRAIN INDUSTRIES, IN PROGRESSIVE GOVERNMENT. OUR COMMITMENT TO EDUCATION HAS MEANT A BETTER LIFE FOR PEOPLE WHO LIVE IN MINNESOTA.

I'M SHARING THESE THOUGHTS WITH YOU BECAUSE I WANT PLACES LIKE THIS HIGH SCHOOL -- ALL HIGH SCHOOLS IN MINNESOTA -- TO GIVE US THE DRIVE AND LEADERSHIP TO CREATE A BETTER MINNESOTA AFTER WE HAVE STRUGGLED THROUGH THE CRISIS THAT NOW FACES US.

* * *

SOME OF WHAT I HAVE TO SAY MAY NOT BE COMFORTING TO SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS AND SCHOOL BOARDS. FOR MANY OF THEM, INNOVATION COMES EASILY ENOUGH -- BUT FOR OTHERS, THE WAY IT WAS DONE YESTERDAY IS THE MOST COMFORTABLE. THAT'S NOT GOING TO BE GOOD ENOUGH.

FOR STARTERS, I WANT TO CALL A HALT TO THE WHOLESALING CUTTING OF CLASSROOM TEACHERS WHEN SCHOOL BUDGETS GET TIGHT. SPECIFICALLY, I'M DISTRESSED THAT THE TEACHING OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES MAY BE FALLING BY THE WAYSIDE IN MINNESOTA. SOME SCHOOLS ARE CUTTING BACK ON MATH AND SCIENCE.

IT'S EASY TO SAY "WE CAN'T AFFORD IT," BUT IT'S ALSO EASY TO WONDER HOW MINNESOTA IS GOING TO PRODUCE EXECUTIVES AND WORKERS FOR WHAT I BELIEVE IS A WORLD MARKETPLACE. HOW DO WE SELL TO THE GERMANS, THE JAPANESE, THE RUSSIANS, UNLESS WE SPEAK THEIR LANGUAGE? NOT MANY MONTHS AGO, I RETURNED FROM THREE YEARS IN EUROPE AS A REPRESENTATIVE

OF A MAJOR COMPUTER COMPANY. BELIEVE ME, I KNOW FIRST-HAND WHAT A DIFFERENCE IT MAKES TO BE ABLE TO TALK TO A SALES PROSPECT IN HIS OWN LANGUAGE.

(ANECDOTES)

SO I RAISE THESE QUESTIONS -- DO WE NEED 435 ADMINISTRATIVE SCHOOL DISTRICTS IN MINNESOTA, EACH HAVING ITS OWN SUPERINTENDENT, ITS OWN PAYROLL AND PURCHASING DEPARTMENT? AREN'T THERE WAYS TO REDUCE ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS TO FREE UP MONEY FOR LANGUAGE TEACHERS, OR COMPUTERS OR SCIENCE?

BEING LITERATE IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE IS NOT ENOUGH TODAY. OUR GOAL SHOULD BE TO GRADUATE STUDENTS WITH AT LEAST ONE FOREIGN LANGUAGE -- AND FLUENCY IN THE LANGUAGE OF THE COMPUTER.

SCHOOLS MUST COME INTO THE COMPUTER AGE. I KNOW THAT MANY SCHOOLS HAVE THEIR APPLES ... OR IBMs ... OR CONTROL DATAs. BUT MANY OTHERS DO NOT, AND THAT IS UNFORGIVEABLE.

TIME MAGAZINE CALLED THE COMPUTER ITS "MAN OF THE YEAR" FOR A REASON. OUR FUTURE SOCIETY WILL BE RUN BY THOSE WHO RUN THE COMPUTER. SO LET'S GET THE COMPUTER INTO SCHOOL ---- TO PREPARE OUR CHILDREN FOR THE FUTURE AND TO BETTER MANAGE THE BUSINESS SIDE OF THE SCHOOLS THEMSELVES.

SCHOOLS ALSO SHOULD SERVE AS A MODEL FOR THEIR COMMUNITIES IN OTHER WAYS. COMPUTERIZATION IS ONE. ENERGY CONSERVATION IS ANOTHER. MANY OF THESE SCHOOL BUILDINGS WERE BUILT IN THE ERA OF CHEAP ENERGY. THEY ARE WASTEFUL AND THEY USE EXPENSIVE FOSSIL FUELS.

WHAT BETTER PLACE THAN THE LOCAL SCHOOL TO DEMONSTRATE THE COST EFFICIENCIES OF WEATHERIZATION, OR THE ECONOMIC BENEFIT OF BURNING WOOD RESIDUES RATHER THAN OIL?

* * *

WE'VE MADE SOME PROGRESS SINCE I WAS A STUDENT HERE. A YOUNGSTER WHO COULDN'T SPEAK ENGLISH HAS SAT IN THE GOVERNOR'S CHAIR -- AND TODAY I HAVE THAT PRIVILEGE AGAIN. WE SMOOTHED OFF SOME OF THE EDGES IN THE WAY WE TREAT EACH OTHER -- BUT PREJUDICES REMAIN. BEING A WOMAN TODAY, OR BEING BLACK, OR BEING YOUNG, DOESN'T CARRY ALL THE SHACKLES IT ONCE DID. I HAVE TOLD THE CITIZENS OF MINNESOTA OF MY DESIRE TO APPOINT MORE WOMEN, MORE BLACKS, MORE PEOPLE OF ALL RACES, AND ESPECIALLY MORE YOUNG PEOPLE. I HAVE COMMITTED MYSELF TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A MINNESOTA COMMISSION ON YOUTH. AND I WILL APPOINT MINNESOTA HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE STUDENTS TO SERVE WITH ADULTS ON THAT BODY.

BUT APPOINTMENTS ALONE WILL NOT CREATE A BEST OF ALL POSSIBLE WORLDS. IF THAT WORLD EXISTS, IT WILL COME FROM INQUISITIVE MINDS, FROM YOUNG MINDS WILLING TO TAKE A LOOK AT HOW IT'S DONE ELSEWHERE. WE ARE ONE PEOPLE IN MINNESOTA -- NOT A PEOPLE DIVIDED BY REGIONS AND SPEECH PATTERNS. NOT ALL GOOD COMES FROM THE IRON RANGE. NOT ALL EVIL STEMS FROM BIG CITIES. JUST AS I AM GOVERNOR OF THE WHOLE STATE, YOU ARE YOUNG CITIZENS OF THE WHOLE STATE.

IF I DO NOTHING ELSE TODAY, I WANT TO GET YOU AROUSED ABOUT SOMETHING.

I WANT YOU TO THINK ABOUT THE PRICE YOU WILL HAVE TO PAY IF YOU DON'T WATCH WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE WORLD AROUND YOU. THE DECISIONS BEING MADE IN WASHINGTON -- AND ST. PAUL -- WILL DETERMINE WHAT KIND OF A LIFE YOU WILL LEAD 10 ... 20 ... 30 YEARS FROM NOW.

THEY WILL DETERMINE WHETHER YOU WILL WANT TO BRING CHILDREN INTO THE WORLD -- AND WHETHER THOSE CHILDREN WILL HAVE THE KIND OF EDUCATION YOU'RE HAVING TODAY. AND THEY WILL DETERMINE WHETHER YOU CAN AFFORD THAT KIND OF EDUCATION FOR THEM.

I'M ASKING YOU TO LEARN FROM THE MISTAKES OF GOVERNMENT, TO QUESTION OUR ACTIONS, TO CHALLENGE OUR GOALS. ASK US WHETHER WE ARE RIGHT IN BUILDING A NEW SCHOOL, OR RAISING A TAX, OR CLOSING A HOSPITAL, OR BUILDING AN MX MISSILE.

ONE OF THE GREAT THINGS THIS COUNTRY HAS DONE IS TO HELP UPGRADE THE LIVES OF ITS PEOPLE, WHILE AT THE SAME TIME KEEPING A STRONG DEFENSE. ONE OF THE QUESTIONS WE NOW MUST ASK IS WHETHER A BALANCE STILL REMAINS. THE GOVERNMENT TALKS OF SPENDING BILLIONS FOR MISSILES, FOOD SHELVES ARE BARE AT TIMES, AND 60 OR 70 MILES FROM HERE, FARMERS' CORN IS PILED IN THE STREETS.

YOU AND I TOGETHER MUST ASK THE HARD QUESTION: DOES IT MAKE ANY SENSE?

* * *

I'M NOT TRYING TO FRIGHTEN YOU ABOUT THE DREARY THINGS THAT LIE AHEAD. WE'RE TALKING ABOUT CHANGES -- CHANGES THAT WILL COME WHETHER WE ARE READY OR NOT. THE WORLD SHOULD HAVE A PLACE FOR YOUR ACTIVE YOUNG MINDS AND HANDS.

BUT IT CONCERNS ME THAT YOUNG PEOPLE SOMETIMES SEEM TO SIT AND WAIT, AND TAKE WHAT COMES. THE FIGURES OF YOUNG PEOPLE VOTING ARE NOT VERY GOOD. YET, THE DECISIONS THAT MUST BE MADE IN MINNESOTA IN THE COMING MONTHS AND YEARS ARE PUBLIC DECISIONS -- TO BE DECIDED BY OFFICIALS YOU WILL HELP TO ELECT.

THE PUBLIC ISN'T INFALLIBLE, EITHER, BUT I'LL STAKE MY FUTURE ON A PUBLIC THAT'S INFORMED, INTERESTED, AND INVOLVED.

I WANT YOU TO GET INVOLVED -- AS MUCH AS YOU CAN NOW, AND FULLY INVOLVED WHEN YOU'RE OLD ENOUGH TO VOTE.

I'M PROUD THAT IMMIGRANTS COULD COME HERE 70 AND 80 YEARS AGO WITH NOTHING BUT A NAME TAG ON THEIR COATS, AND YET COULD SEE THEIR CHILDREN EDUCATED BEYOND THE DREAMS OF THE OLD COUNTRY. I AM ONE OF THOSE CHILDREN -- YOU ARE THOSE CHILDREN.

YOU ONLY GO AROUND ONCE -- YOUR 12 YEARS IN SCHOOL HERE IN MINNESOTA SHOULD BE PACKED AS FULL AS YOU CAN MAKE THEM OF BOOKS, DISCUSSIONS, DEBATES, GAMES, QUESTIONS AND CHALLENGES.

THE OPPORTUNITY IS PRICELESS. DON'T LET IT GO BY.
YOU CAN'T SIT AND WRING YOUR HANDS AND BLAME THE POLITICIANS --
OR THE CORPORATIONS -- OR THE LABOR UNIONS.

WE'RE ALL POLITICIANS IN ONE WAY OR ANOTHER.

THANK YOU FOR HAVING ME HERE TODAY. AND TO THE PEOPLE OF
MINNESOTA, THANK YOU FOR LISTENING. IT'S A NEW YEAR. IT'S FULL OF
PROBLEMS. BUT IT'S FULL OF PROMISE.

LET'S GO AT IT -- TOGETHER.