

# **Inaugural Address of Governor Arch A Moore Jr**

**January 15, 1973**

Judge Haden, distinguished former Governors, Senator Randolph, Senator Byrd, members of our Congressional delegation, Governor Holton, Governor Dunn, my colleagues of the Board of Public Works, members of the Judiciary, my fellow West Virginians --

Four years ago I submitted to the solemn oath and assumed the responsibilities as Governor of our State of West Virginia. This was a great and awesome undertaking. It was also a rare and significant honor bestowed upon a man, his family, a West Virginian of the most modest beginnings.

Today, under the most unusual historical circumstances, I am privileged to be the first governor in more than 100 years to succeed himself.

In gratitude of the trust and confidence West Virginians have placed in me and my administration, I accept again an even more rare responsibility and hereby assume an even greater commitment to the citizens of my State.

My inaugural message four years ago was long in verbiage, but was strong and hopeful. It was realistically challenging to me, as Governor, and to the people of West Virginia.

In essence, I pledged that my administration would produce as no other administration had produced in the history of our State.

I challenged every single citizen to do more for West Virginia than he had done in the past. I said that by mutual cooperation and effort we could lead this State and its citizens to a position of respect, prestige and understanding never before attained.

That address with all its rhetoric, strength and hopefulness, can be captured in one sentence in which was said: "I truly believe the people of West Virginia expect more of this administration than they have of any administration in recent history."

At the beginning, some said that the hopes and goals that we had set for ourselves were filled with innocence. They said that no man, no group of men and women, no administration could ever meet the demands we had placed upon ourselves.

But we refused to accept the time-worn thesis that a Governor has strange limitations to which he must conform, to the disappointment of the people of our State.

We explored and carefully used the powers of Governor. We pressed time frames upon ourselves. We set high and noble goals that we felt must be attained. We were not content unless they were met.

At all times, we have spoken plainly and with candor on the vital issues presented to us by the day. We have said what we would do, and we have done what we said we would do. We have never been satisfied to be told that something is impossible of accomplishment.

We have adhered to the truth of our own political axiom that what the people want most of their public servants is honesty of purpose, honesty of desire, honesty in performance, and, more importantly, honesty in dealing with them and the complex problems constantly arising.

We never blamed others for the neglect of the past, for our goal was to press forward - and that we have done.

Today, we set anew our challenges for change for these years immediately ahead.

As we perform as the leader of one of the 50 states - however important that performance is to the people of West Virginia - I believe it has a real significance in the relationship of our State and all states to our federal government.

It has been said by a great number of political scientists and social writers of our time that the importance of State government is fast diminishing - that State government cannot do the job because it is made up of weak men of weak purpose.

The very existence of state governments within our federal republic has been threatened by national debate precipitated largely by the uninformed. Granted, the question of the value of state governments and their ability to perform has been raised by demands of the people for government to act - any government for that matter - and sometimes compounded by something less than sterling leadership in the states themselves which encouraged such discussion.

This debate continues today mostly by those who feel it more satisfying to obtain their opinions of purposeful and beneficial movement from only the federal government.

Rarely, if ever, do they examine or chronicle the governmental improvements made by the governments of the 50 sovereign states. This encourages a non-responsive public servant, a less than interested electorate, and an unfactual news media.

I believe state governments today are stronger than at any time in our modern history. I believe there is now a new quality of leadership in a vast number of our state governments.

I believe the states to be powerful. Considering domestic public service only, and omitting national defense and international relationships, the states are growing more rapidly in importance than any other level of government.

There are those who say that this belief is not supported by anyone of noted political scholarship in the nation today. If that be the case, I suggest we are the victims of lazy political scholarship.

It appears that James Madison, almost two hundred years ago, advanced sound prophecy when he observed, and I quote:

"The first and most natural attachment of the people will be to the governments of their respective states. Into the administration of these a greater number of individuals will expect to rise. From the gift of these, a greater number of offices and emoluments will flow. By superintending care of these, all the more domestic and personal interest of the people will be regulated and provided for. With the affairs of these, the people will be more familiarly and minutely conversant."

Yet, this best testimony so near are beginnings as a Nation - and the present day constructive responses by state governments - are totally disregarded.

The utter failure of the federal government to perform, and its continued contribution to the disenchantment of the people of this Nation, is given little attention by the political scholars of our time.

Why do I emphasize this in an inaugural ceremony of a Governor of one of the 50 states?

Simply because I believe what happens in state government can be innovative; that state government can effectively respond to the challenge of its citizens; that state government can be of high purpose and made up of strongly dedicated men and women, who perform in the best interests of the greater majority of its citizens, we, as West Virginians, can make a positive advancement to the cause and the reason for state governments and thereby strengthen our federal republic.

Very frankly, I am satisfied that what our Nation needs in its presidency in the future is a governor from one of our states. Then, and only then, will the federal government move to work closely with the various state governments, and then we can restore the people's confidence in their collective governments' ability to respond.

Here in our State of West Virginia, many good examples have been undertaken to give proof that State government does an effective job. It can and does rise to meet the expectations of the people. Granted, all is not perfect; all is not good; all the problems are not solved. But West Virginians know there is a difference today. West Virginians know that today they have a State government that cares for the people.

The State of West Virginia, by close and constructive examination, is a prime example of the manner in which state government can and has met its responsibilities.

Such an examination will reveal the excellent cooperation of the legislative branch of government, even though it be in its majority of opposite political inclination than that of the Governor.

No Governor of any state in this Union has stronger legislative leadership available to help than that evidenced in West Virginia by the President of the State Senate, the Speaker of the House of Delegates and the minority leadership of each of these legislative bodies.

However, our greatest obstacle to even greater cooperation in order to produce the most good for the most of our people is a little narrow band of self-proclaimed oracles, who seek to pit us, one against the other, without concern or regard for the State or its citizens as a whole.

To those men and women of our Legislature who place the interests of our State first, I am deeply indebted. Their own great satisfaction is in seeing their State and its citizens prosper.

While it is suggested by some that the last four years were great years for the State of West Virginia and its citizens, we are constantly challenged to go well beyond our present progress,

and to meet our even greater rising expectations and to improve further every area of the life of the State for which we have the responsibility.

The goals we have set, and to which I am personally committed, will far exceed our efforts of the last four years.

I willingly accept this challenge for myself and for my associates in government with the full realization that as public servants, working together, we can even yet write a finer chapter in the history of our State.

Four years ago, I concluded my inaugural address with several brief observations which I want to repeat today; for I believe these to be as true today as they were four years ago!

"In coming here today, I made few public promises during my journey . . . . I made none in private conversation."

"If others persist that Appalachia shall be our national symbol, let us convert it into the realization that 'Good things are happening in West Virginia.'"

"No man is free who is not master of himself."

"Let hope, courage, faith and industry be our daily companions in these years ahead."

"With God's guidance, I shall lead;

"With God's help, we shall have a new beginning;

"With God's will, we shall succeed."