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Greetings from Governor Arthur B. Langlie

Arthur B. Langlie

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that is the method I am not only going to follow but have been told to follow by the Convention Committee.)

I will say, Mr. Lundin—members of the Spokane County Bar Association—we welcome the opportunity to be back here in convention again. I think I can say without fear of contradiction that every past convention in this beautiful city has been a memorable and very pleasant occasion. I have no doubt this one will be even more memorable and more pleasant than those prior ones. If you do not learn much, you will at least be exposed to learning. It gives every indication that the Convention program itself—the business of the Association—is going to be of considerable interest to you, and that the social affairs arranged by our hosts are going to be up to the same splendid plane they were in the past.

So, Mr. Lundin, whatever signal it is you give as the hosts here, I think you can give it for the officers to start battling governors and for speakers to warm up. I think the kitchen should be alerted to have glasses polished in sufficient number and be made available for use.

We are here, ready to proceed, and glad to be here, and we hope we can comport ourselves so that we will be invited back here again some day

GREETINGS FROM GOVERNOR ARTHUR B. LANGLIE

President Nicholson, Officers, and Members of the State Bar and Bench. I always enjoy fellowship with my fellow members of the Bar and am particularly happy to be here with you today. I know that many of you are here to talk shop, and perhaps the things I would like to discuss with you today may seem to some of you a little off the beaten path for which you traveled over here, but I cannot overlook the opportunity, as Governor, to talk with men and women that I feel must exercise a tremendous influence upon the people of our state, and in these times that influence is particularly important.

I have had the unique privilege of being a politician and for a time a practicing member of the Bar. I have had the chance to look at both sides of the fence. It is my personal feeling that a lawyer has a big obligation and responsibility in the field of political science, and I know of no art that has been neglected as much in this country of ours for many years as that particular responsibility.

As we complain of the conditions we find in government today—no matter at what level—I think we can attribute most of them to a

matter of political delinquency on the part of all of us.

The failure in democracies is not because of our system of law under our Constitution. The failure emanates from the weaknesses of people to make that machinery work properly

Over and over again, as I experience the problems of government, I marvel how the check and balance system—a little bit inefficient as it may be at times—will work out the weaknesses in a proposition, and find its strength, and protect us from affairs that frequently could wreck us—protect us from our own human weaknesses.

And yet I am satisfied that over a period of years we have drifted away from essential responsibilities of citizenship until at the present time we think too much of government as something to get from, rather than something to give to, so that its services may more effectively help us all.

We know that government was set up to do for the people of our country, our state, and our cities the things they themselves cannot do as well individually or collectively. We like to feel that as much independence of action be preserved for the individual as possible, and we hope that we can maintain the maximum amount of that. We know there are common problems. That businessmen perform services, as individuals or corporations, in our land. That some of those services must necessarily be taken over by government, but because people have found that government has credit, and that government has authority, and that government can mortgage the future, we have gone so far overboard that it is getting to be a contest. That anything we want personally, if we are smart enough, we can work it out so government can give it to us, and somehow or other we may never have to pay for it.

We who have studied the law and understand the Constitution and the framework of our government, and how these laws operate to protect individual rights and freedoms and to protect one man's right against another's, know the weaknesses of that system. Yet we must realize that if we neglect continuously the responsibilities of government, we are going to corrupt this thing and destroy it—and the only answer will be the answer that everybody is decrying about, and that is a totalitarian form of government which today is communism—and presented to us in a very forceful way throughout the country

We have heard talks on communism at Bar Association meetings for years. I have delivered a few. I have circulated pamphlets in this state as far back as 1944, telling about new communist conspiracy

and actions, and how communists might try to overthrow government by force, and are now doing it by drowning us in red ink—by setting one group against the other, by building prejudice throughout various groups for all the ideals that play such an important part in the American way of life. And I have found to my sorrow we are organizing in this country up to the hilt—in one group after another—but when it comes to taking a position on a basic issue in this country, so far as organizations are concerned, it is like pulling teeth to get them into any controversial issue—studying it, and then taking a stand on it—because each one has its individual program to meet, its own individual problems, needs, and desires, and he doesn't want to get into something too broad that might eliminate someone who could go along on his particular objective.

The time has come when we lawyers are going to have to take back a responsibility that once belonged to us and properly belongs to us now. We represent a very great influence in the public affairs of city, county, state, and nation, and we are going to have to bury some of our political prejudices—wherever we stand—and put our country ahead of our party and speak frankly.

It is only natural each and every one of us would think at times, "Well, I have a future ahead of me, and I don't know whether I want to go into this. I may want to get in politics. I may want to do this, or that, or the other thing, and so I have to protect my own position down here, so my chances are improved."

And that sort of thinking is the thinking that has brought our country's affairs to what I think today is a very low level. And if we who understand the principles of government do not start functioning more honestly and more quickly in public affairs, we just aren't going to be able to preserve free institutions of government and continue a government by law. It just cannot be done the way we are going today—where everyone feels, or so many do, that government is a place to get something, and that after all we don't have to worry about what we put into it—that eventually we will get around to balancing the budget and some other things.

I want to talk just a few minutes about a basic problem in our own state. No matter how much is said about it, the average citizen has very little comprehension of it. That is the welfare problem.

Most people have it in their hearts to want to take care of the old people who need help, the blind who need help, the dependent children who, through no fault of their own, are dependent and need help. There

are others who have disabilities, and no one wants to see them go out and starve. And individuals not being able to gather up enough money to take care of the large number have come to recognize that even groups can't do it—so let's have the government do it. We will all pay a little more taxes and those people will be taken care of.

Basically, we all see eye to eye that those deserving should be taken care of—and there is room in government for that kind of program. So we politicians, sensing that the people feel that way, recognize a great field in which to gather votes, and we go out and say all these things we are going to do. And a lot of people say "I believe that fellow is going to do more for us than this other fellow" And so the support comes.

The Communists, under their new planning, realize, as Lenin once said, that democracies can be drowned in red ink, and they see a wonderful field in which to promote expenditure of public funds and keep us fighting one another and confused. So they move in—not with just support. They write our laws for us. They doll them up and prepare them in such a nice way that they look good to the public. Then they go out and organize them. Nobody wants to fight them because there are too many people out there who like that very kind of thing and are going to be very militant about their citizenship responsibilities if the politician running for office goes out for that.

I know all about that because in 1943 I got on one of those measures, and I fought it, and I took the radio and we talked a lot about it, and enough people got to understand it, and it was defeated. But they got even. In a very short time—in 1944—a lot of the people decided that man didn't represent their interests, and they took care of that in an election.

Politicians have learned over a period of time that when they attack some law or policy that affects a segment of people very, very keenly, they do not forget, and those people will get them sooner or later, because in public office you step on enough toes here and there, and if you alienate any substantial block of people, your term of life in politics is relatively short.

Now I am talking about this for the simple reason I am trying to point out our citizenship stands—our knowledge of what is going on in government and how it affects us—has to be a lot more advanced than it is today in order that we may get more intelligent direction of our government by officials who want to do the right thing. And after all, if the only way you can continue to run government and be an

influence is to cater to people who want something, and if the only time you get pinched is when you levy taxes to pay for those things, then, of course, we are going in for a period of deficient financing, so that finally the very financial stability of the country is being destroyed.

Now in ten years the federal government tax demand has increased 598 per cent. In ten years state and local government taxes have increased 67 per cent in this country

Now why didn't the local taxes go up as fast as the national taxes? Because the local government officials are a lot closer to the people. They can get at them. People don't want to pay for a lot of these things, and if they know at the time they have to pay for them, of course they don't go for them. And our big difficulty is that we have been going on this expenditure level without asking the people to pay the freight, and Communists have always been against any taxes, but always for more expenditures.

Now we get down to a point where we have to use these issues for partisan advantage. So anybody who goes out to restrict expenditures is immediately alienating substantial support. The other people are divided any way—some also against it, but after all, they have their Party to think of. The net result is we have diffused our effectiveness in standing on issues and voting on principles in this country until people finally say it does not make any difference any way; we have to elect someone; we always get the same thing. And we become a frustrated people politically, jumping from one crisis to another crisis, until we get to the point where the state is going broke, as it is now—heading for the red sixty million dollars at the end of this biennium.

For the first time we begin to wonder about this welfare thing, and we are able to go out and get signatures on an initiative that will make it possible to cut that down—fifty or sixty million a biennium—and put some sense into it, and yet right now, ladies and gentlemen, I dare say you can go out in your community, take ten people in a block, ask them about Initiatives 178 or 176, tell them their relation to welfare, and they will have very little, if any, interest in them, until you explain it is going to cost them something if they don't support it, and they may show a spark of life, until somebody comes along and says it can be taken care of in this Legislature—then they sidle back into an easy chair again.

Our biggest problem in government today is to somehow get people to know about the facts in their own government. Some of these problems are unpleasant, and some involved, and yet there are some basic

facts in all of them that the people can grasp and understand, and no matter how much we talk over the radio, no matter how much literature we can turn out through the Secretary of State's office, the people just don't get the facts to the point where they can actually deal with these problems on the basis that they should. And somehow or other I feel that the lawyers have a big responsibility on this thing—to give more leadership than they do in this field of trying to translate the affairs of our government to the people.

I have enjoyed very wholesome coöperation with the state Bar while I have been your governor. It has been a privilege to coöperate with you in the realm of selecting judges for our judiciary, and trying to improve our judicial system, and I have enjoyed the wholesome way in which you have endeavored to make recommendations to me, and I shall continue in every way that I can to work with you in every possible way, to maintain and strengthen the respect of people in their courts and in the processes of the law, which I think is essential and important. I believe that most lawyers will agree with me that in our profession we have a big job to do—to win more confidence from the people for our profession.

Some short time ago there was investigation made about the kind of people that made the best public officials, and the percentage they were now selecting of lawyers for public officials in this poll was to me alarmingly low. They selected businessmen and other categories ahead of the legal profession in spite of the training.

Now there is a reason for that, I think. Sometimes I feel we haven't measured up fully to the responsibilities that properly belong to us because of the training, the knowledge, and the abilities that we have.

Frankly, if other people are guilty of exploiting government for their personal interests, we lawyers cannot escape that challenge either. We have some problems ahead of us. Anybody who looks at the world situation today must recognize our kind of government is being challenged in a way that it has not every been before.

Maybe that is a good thing. Maybe it will alert us to our responsibilities and get us to working a lot more, but it does not do us much good to talk about the Korean situation, or who is involved for getting us into it, or the mistakes made (everybody admits there were plenty).

But, really, we have to start in the grass roots in our cities, counties, and our state, and make our government function more effectively in the interests of the people. Start taking out of it those things that should not be there and improve it so that we can make this machinery

work. If it works at the local level effectively, maybe more of the responsibilities will come back where they belong.

Frankly, I believe that there is a lot that the lawyers can do to constructively criticize what is going on in their state government. I invite you now—all of you—to feel free to give us any assistance that you can in improving the effectiveness of your state government. In six years I can count on my two hands constructive suggestions—any suggestions—that have come from members of the Bar of this state voluntarily, for improving our state government. I should eliminate from that those members of the Bar who are in the legislative halls, where we have had frequent discussions. But I am concerned that there is not enough interest in our government by the people. It is going by default. We are being pushed around by scheming individuals who play one individual against another, and one group against another. And comprehensive long-range programs to maintain democracies, a government by law, a sound financial structure for the future, are being completely neglected by the people and leadership must be given among the people.

Some time ago a man made a rather exhaustive study as to why this country was going off to the left with a lot of foolish ideas, and he came to the conclusion that some five or ten thousand people throughout the United States were the cause of it. Most of them never had any practical experience in making a living for themselves. Most of them never had any basic education as to the laws or institutions of our country, but educated after a fashion—who had a new answer for all the problems of the times, and some new theory or set-up that vested new power in some top planning people.

And he believes the real cause—this investigator—for our troubles today, is that a lot of people—doctors, lawyers, machinists, labor leaders, rank and file citizens—who have the ability are failing to give the leadership that they should, and the time that they should, to the affairs of our government, and thereby maintaining these institutions of government.

The opportunity for doing something about this is now. Sometimes it takes a good threat or scare to bolt us into the need for taking on new responsibility. The doctors have never been so interested in government as the last two or three years. They begin to understand what government can do. They are learning that when government does something for people it does something to people also. They are beginning to understand that whenever government goes in to help out, that

government has its innings also, and takes—and believe me, they are beginning to wonder if instead of spending quite so much time with their noses right to their professional problems, that their citizenship shouldn't come in for ten, fifteen, or twenty per cent of their time.

If that be true of doctors, how much more true it should be of lawyers.

I am certainly proud of the members of the profession that have served in the state government. That is especially true this last time I have been in Olympia, and in this last session I became especially acquainted with a lot of our attorney members of the Legislature, and I certainly feel that they accredited themselves well. They served very fine. They are taking the kind of unselfish interest—many of them—that is a credit to our profession.

I sincerely hope that out of this session of the state Bar will come some new ideas for developing better programs to improve the administration of our courts, to improve for the public the practice of the law, to elevate the standards for our profession, and that out of this session may come new conceptions of the place of the lawyer in government.

And I want to invite again each and every one of you for your constructive criticism from time to time about state government. Lots of people are loath to come in and lay a criticism on my desk—even though they feel it very deeply. They seem to feel that if I should not like it, that maybe sometime I might do them a dirty trick. Frankly, I feel the other way about it. I am more than happy to have called to my attention weaknesses in the fabric of state government, that we may try to do something about it—for we know that we have to answer to the people for those things that do not function satisfactorily, and we like to know where the weak spots are. All too often we live in a kind of atmosphere where we don't get the criticism. We don't hear about the things that are wrong until it is too late to do much about it, and for that reason we welcome your suggestions and your help.

It has been a privilege to have a chance to meet with you, and on behalf of the people of the state, I extend greetings and best wishes.

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

BY V O. NICHOSON

I am going to relate to you as simply and with as few words as possible some of the things I have learned the past year about what goes on in bar associations behind the "iron curtain."