

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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ACTS AND RESOLVES

AS PASSED BY THE

One Hundred and Fourth Legislature

OF THE

STATE OF MAINE

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Messages
of
Governor Kenneth M. Curtis

to the

ONE HUNDRED AND FOURTH LEGISLATURE

January 1, 1969

February 4, 1969

July 2, 1969

**REMARKS OF GOVERNOR KENNETH M. CURTIS AT THE OPENING
SESSION OF THE 104TH LEGISLATURE**

January 1, 1969

Mr. Speaker, Mr. President and newly elected members of the 104th Legislature:

Let me congratulate you all on your assumption of duties as members of the 104th Legislature. This Legislative Session, of which you are privileged to be a part, has vital decisions to make. These decisions are crucially important in the changing times in which we live. These decisions will profoundly affect Maine's future.

Because today is a national holiday, I will not deliver a formal message of substance concerning our State's needs and problems. I look forward to meeting with you on January 9th in joint convention to present my Budget Message.

My presentation of this recommended financial plan for the next biennium will include a lengthy factual report on the state of the State of Maine and an explanation of suggested future directions,

I will combine both my principal budget recommendations and a brief outline of Legislative proposals at that time. Later I will present, through written communications, several special messages that make specific suggestions in the fields of economic development and conservation, governmental reform and efficiency and human resources.

I would like to extend to each of you and to your families my very best wishes for a pleasant and prosperous New Year. I look forward to our association during this Session as we mutually strive to determine a program that will best serve the people of the State of Maine.

**SPECIAL MESSAGE
TO THE 104th MAINE LEGISLATURE
BY
GOVERNOR KENNETH M. CURTIS**

February 4, 1969

In my Budget Message, I stated that I would be delivering a series of Special Messages to the Legislature, containing, in more detail than was possible in a budget message, suggestions for legislation in a number of different areas. A concern for the Human Resources of our State is the subject of my first Special Message.

INTRODUCTION

Poverty in Maine is no longer invisible. We see it on television and read about it in the newspapers. We see it as we drive and we are moved by it. At a time when so many of us know material comfort, the deprivations of those living so close to us is shocking. Comfort has not dulled our consciences. To the contrary, with our growing prosperity as a state, we have become more sensitive to the rights of all our people to share the benefits of that prosperity. With developing techniques for combatting physical and mental illness, we have become more concerned that these techniques be used to cure the suffering of all our people. With our increased concern for the quality of our own lives, we care more for the quality of life of all people.

We also know that the whole of our state cannot know true well-being as long as a part of it is suffering and in want. We have learned during the thirty years since the depression that government can and should devise programs to sustain the income of people whose earning powers have been temporarily or permanently impaired. We are concerned about the contributions that each individual can make to the overall productivity and diversity of our state.

In short, we know that Maine prospers only if all Maine people prosper.

WELFARE REFORM

After a thorough, 18-month study, the Citizens Task Force on Intergovernmental Welfare Programs has recommended a comprehensive program of welfare reform which would generate \$17 million in federal funds, for an increased state expenditure of \$12 million. I strongly support this program.

The Task Force's principal recommendation urges that the administration of all general assistance programs be transferred from the municipalities to the State. Under our present welfare system, the State administers the specialized programs of assistance to the Aged, Blind, Disabled and Families with Dependent Children, and the Federal Government shares the cost of these programs. The general assistance programs now administered by the municipalities are financed entirely from local poverty taxes and the State's General Fund. The new arrangement would relieve the municipalities of the cost of general assistance programs.

The present system, in addition to being costly for the municipalities, is also inequitable because of the absence of uniform standards for administration. Personal judgments of municipal officers who must be concerned with the size of a town's relief appropriation, control the amount of payments to a poor family, rather than need. The State of Maine is one of only a few states that have established no state standards for administering general assistance.

Despite often excellent local work, the present system tends to be inefficient, principally because of the archaic settlement laws. Hours and days are wasted in determining which town, if any, should pay for general assistance. Under a state-wide program of general assistance, determining the municipality of settlement becomes irrelevant and the time saved can be put to other uses.

The Task Force proposal does provide for the continuing presence of local services. The Commissioner of the Department of Health and Welfare, acting on the recommendation of municipal officers, will appoint a municipal service officer, to authorize emergency general assistance to families or individuals and to bring these cases to the attention of the Department of Health and Welfare staff. Consequently, the financial and administrative benefits of state responsibility will complement the maintenance of local services.

I hope that the true purposes of this welfare reform are thoroughly understood — to improve services to those in need, and to relieve the municipalities of another expense. The towns and cities have been working with an impossibly archaic system that should be replaced. The Task Force proposal is intended to correct this system, and it is not critical of the many dedicated local officials who have so conscientiously struggled to meet their responsibilities.

In addition to its major recommendation, the Task Force on Intergovernmental Welfare Programs suggested a number of other measures which I support, and which are reflected in the Budget Document.

First, administrative limits should be removed from AFDC payments, thus enabling these payments to meet the full budgeted needs of recipients. Present limitations deny essential aid to many needy families and often must be supplemented by local tax dollars. The result, as the Task Force Report emphasized, is self perpetuating poverty. The report states:

“There is no basis for exploring rehabilitative measures leading to self-support with a family trying to exist on a near-starvation level.”

The budget also provides funds for removal of the requirement that cities and towns share 18% of the cost of AFDC for settled cases. Abolition of the settlement laws, crucial to the whole scheme of welfare reform, requires this change, and it is another instance of state assumption of local costs.

Second, under existing law the State can grant assistance to unemployed fathers and their families, with the Federal Government paying 69.92 cents of every dollar spent in the program. At the present time the number of these families in the program is severely limited, despite the fact that such families comprise one-sixth of the general assistance caseload. If aid to these families were increased, the State would meet an urgent need, take advantage of available federal funds not now used, and provide an effective counter to any future period of economic recession.

Third, the Department of Health and Welfare should explore ways of expanding the Food Stamp and Donated Commodities Programs. At the present time the food stamp program is operative only in Androscoggin County, and the donated commodities program, which served 62,500 people in 1959, now serves less than 15,000 people, largely because many municipalities are unable or unwilling to bear the administrative costs.

These two programs, if more thoroughly implemented, would aid in eliminating hunger in Maine. It is unnecessary and intolerable that anyone in this day and age should go hungry in our State.

Fourth, we should act now to expand the Medicaid plan to include all the medically indigent. At the present time Maine's participation in Medicaid is

limited to persons receiving federal categorical assistance (over 65, under 21, disabled or blind) and to children receiving foster care. Although this program reaches about 40,000 people, there are, according to Health and Welfare Department estimates, at least 150,000 other people who are medically indigent — unable to afford essential medical services. I support the recommendation of the Task Force that the Medicaid program be expanded to include the medically indigent.

Fifth, I fully support a program for the purchase of prescription drugs and dental care for welfare recipients eligible for Title 19 assistance. The state Medicaid program presently excludes the cost of prescription drugs and dental care, a limitation which forces recipients of federal categorical assistance to make an impossible choice between the purchase of necessary food or drugs. We should eliminate this hardship by including in our Medicaid program the purchase of drugs and dental care.

EXPANSION OF OTHER HEALTH AND WELFARE PROGRAMS

There is a need for intensified programs of employment training and counselling to aid the problems of the poor.

The Work Incentive Program, required by the Federal Government as a condition of its contribution to the AFDC program, would provide such services to unemployed fathers, to mothers who volunteer for the program, and to children 16 or older who are not in school. The program would operate through a staff of education and work training specialists in each district office, and through state sharing of the administrative expenses for work training and placement programs operated by the Employment Security Commission. The Federal Government, as part of its overall national program, has allocated 400 work incentive training positions to Maine.

Wage-earning, however, is only one aspect of the successful family unit. Homemaking skills — managing food and money, cooking, the proper care of children — contribute immeasurably to the well-being of a family. In recognition of these total family needs, I have recommended funds that will enable the Department of Health and Welfare to help communities develop homemaker programs that provide emergency and training services.

In instances where a family unit has been broken, and a child has been placed in a foster home, the State has an obligation to assist the foster family in providing the best possible care. Funds recommended for the Division of Child Welfare will permit an average increase in foster home payments of about \$10 a month, with the possibility of higher payments for children with special problems.

I have also recommended funds for the expansion of two other programs administered by the Department of Health and Welfare — Alcoholism Services and Eye Care and Special Services. Both of these programs are central to our overall rehabilitation efforts and both are seriously understaffed. For Alcoholism Services I propose three new counselor positions — one for the Caribou office, one for the Augusta office, and one woman counselor to work with women alcoholics. For Eye Care and Special Services I propose two additional case-workers to work out of the Portland, Augusta and Bangor offices. These case-workers would work closely with the families of pre-school blind children and with the families of older blind individuals who are involved in vocational rehabilitation programs.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

In its recent report, the Maine Commission on Rehabilitation Needs estimated that 52,000 Maine citizens are eligible for existing rehabilitation programs, and that

more than 16,000 psychologically disturbed young people between the ages of 5 and 18 require professional help.

Yet the State's two major vocational rehabilitation services — the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation in the Department of Education and the Division of Eye Care and Special Services in the Department of Health and Welfare — can serve only about 3,000 persons annually. Furthermore, inadequate counselling staff in our schools deprives many youngsters of needed help.

These statistics reflect a terrible waste of human resources. People leave our correctional institutions untrained for work. Disturbed and mentally retarded youngsters leave school with grave problems and no job skills.

To combat this waste and help those in need, I am proposing funds for a vocational rehabilitation program that places nine vocational rehabilitation counselors in our correctional institutions on a permanent basis, provides rehabilitation counselors and administrative staff for the development and expansion of programs at Maine Medical Center, Mercy Hospital, Maine Osteopathic Hospital, junior and senior high schools, and reduces the caseload at district offices. These funds would also be used to provide grants to communities that are developing their own vocational rehabilitation programs. Most of the programs described involve federal matching money, usually at a 4 to 1 ratio.

I further propose, in accord with a proposal of the Commission on Rehabilitation Needs, the creation of a Bureau of Rehabilitation within the Department of Health and Welfare.

This Bureau would coordinate the services of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, to be transferred from the Department of Education, plus the Division of Eye Care and Special Services, the Division of Alcoholism Services, and any other rehabilitation programs that are developed.

I also endorse the proposal of the Commission on Rehabilitation Needs that we grant permanent status to the Committee on Employment of the Handicapped. This committee has performed invaluable work over the years, encouraging business and industry to accept the handicapped for job placement. This work must continue.

EXPANDED PROGRAMS AT MENTAL HEALTH AND CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTIONS

In addition to the nine vocational rehabilitation counselors for our correctional institutions mentioned above, I have recommended funds to improve the vocational instruction programs at the Men's Correctional Center, Maine State Prison, Boys Training Center and the Stevens School. I have also recommended funds for improved medical care at the Men's Correctional Center and the Boys Training Center, as well as funds for additional aftercare workers for the placement and supervision of girls outside of Stevens.

For our mental health institutions at Augusta and Bangor, I have recommended increased professional personnel, as well as funds for pay incentive programs for work by patients which trains them for meaningful employment. At Bangor I have requested eleven additional nurses for the mental retardation unit.

I have also requested funds for a pay incentive program at Pineland, where, with proper training, the mentally retarded can make remarkable progress. For the Governor Baxter School for the Deaf I have recommended staff increases for its important educational program.

These improvements in program and personnel, crucial though they are, will be pointless if we do not simultaneously improve the physical conditions of our institutions. To advance this goal I have proposed a capital program involving the following major items:

1. At Augusta State Hospital, which has only limited accreditation, the continuation of hospital building renovations, construction of a new admissions and intensive treatment building, the development of a permanent general infirmary, and operating room and laboratory alterations.
2. At Bangor, which is not yet accredited, a modest recreation center, a maintenance building, an admissions and acute treatment ward, and the continuation of ward renovations.
3. At Pineland, construction of a maintenance building and employee housing, and extensive renovations.
4. At the Boys Training Center, construction of a medical-psychiatric intensive care unit for the treatment of highly disturbed aggressive youths, an addition to the Gould Academic Building, and a new living cottage.
5. At the Stevens School, construction of a new dormitory, renovations to the Central School Building, and construction of an all-purpose building.
6. At the Men's Correctional Center, construction of a new warehouse and garage, and improvements in the dining room and kitchen.
7. At the Maine State Prison, construction of an all-purpose building and general improvements in the conditions and security of the institution.
8. At the Governor Baxter School for the Deaf, the first-phase construction of a pre-primary unit and diagnostic center.

This improvements program is extensive, as it must be. The inadequate staffing of our Mental Health and Correctional institutions and their physical limitations, caused by years of neglect, condemn many of our mentally ill and our disturbed offenders, young and old, to years of fruitless confinement. We must end this tragic waste of human resources by providing programs and facilities that cure diseases and cultivate living and working skills.

LABOR

Two years ago, in my inaugural address, I pledged my continuing concern for the welfare of our labor force. I remain committed to that proposition. If our workers do not share the benefits of prosperity, if we train the poor and rehabilitate the handicapped for jobs that are unsafe and low-paying, our promises of well-being are empty.

At the present time our state minimum wage law is \$1.50 an hour, ten cents below the rate required in businesses and industries covered by the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act. I propose raising the state minimum wage to the \$1.60 now required under federal law.

In addition, this state minimum should apply to those businesses, now exempted, which employ fewer than four employees. There is simply no continuing valid reason for excluding employees of small businesses from minimum wage protection.

However, to ease the transition for the small employer not previously covered, I propose to start such action at the lower rate of \$1.40 for one year, moving gradually in two steps to the \$1.60 minimum. Hospitals and nursing homes that come under minimum wage coverage at a later date would be allowed one year

to catch up. A period of adjustment for newly covered categories of employment has been the usual procedure in both state and federal minimum wage legislation.

The minimum wage law for work on major public construction projects presently covers only those projects contracted by the state, despite the fact that state money, though not a state contract, is often involved in local school construction and other city and county projects. To correct this inconsistency, and to apply more generally the principle that construction workers on public construction projects should have a minimum wage equal to the prevailing construction wage in the locality, I propose the extension of coverage of the minimum wage on construction projects to all construction contracts of \$10,000 or more involving a county, city, town, school administrative district, or charitable institution.

To supplement the protections for employees of a small business called for in the expansion of minimum wage coverage, I propose comparable coverage expansions for unemployment compensation and workmen's compensation. The present exemptions for employers with less than four employees ignore the painful fact that such employees often experience unusually severe hardship from an occupational injury or lay-off.

These employees receive generally lower wages than the employee of a larger employer, leaving them with fewer reserves to call upon in case of an emergency. We must act at once to elevate thousands of small business employees from their second-class status.

At the same time, to establish more equal treatment between the unemployed and injured worker, I propose raising unemployment benefits to the level of workmen's compensation benefits.

Wages, of course, are only part of the working man's concerns. He also cares greatly about the safety and comfort of his working environment. We share this concern, and we feel that it is time to establish an Occupational Safety Rules and Regulations Board with the authority to formulate and adopt, after proper hearings, rules and regulations for safe, healthful working conditions.

I propose a board of seven members, six of whom shall be appointed by the Department of Labor and Industry subject to the approval of the Governor and Council.

Of the six appointed members, two would represent employers, two employees, one an insurance company licensed to insure Workmen's Compensation within this state, and one the public. The seventh member would be the Commissioner of Labor and Industry, whose Department would have responsibility for enforcing the rules and regulations of the Board through inspections and the issuance of orders. Such orders would be subject to review by the Occupational Safety Board and by the courts. So far as practicable, all rules and regulations adopted by the Board would conform to standards adopted by the U. S. Department of Labor or to other nationally recognized standards of industrial safety.

Our present system of industrial safety control, relying on the general admonition that working conditions shall "be reasonably safe and not in such condition as to be hazardous to the employees engaged therein," is dangerously inadequate.

Neither the industry nor the inspector has any firm standard by which to evaluate safety conditions. Hazards often develop without detection by companies that do not know where to look or by inspectors who simply cannot make enough inspections. With a system of codes that educate the industries and inform the judgments of the inspectors, the industries could comply voluntarily, facilitating the work of the inspectors.

Moreover, federal legislation now pending will undoubtedly establish an Occupational Safety and Health Law within the near future. This legislation would exclude states from exercising safety jurisdiction over industries in interstate commerce, unless those states have an occupational safety code and code-making authority and an inspection program that meet federal requirements. I feel the state has an obligation to insure the safety of its workers. We should not abandon that obligation to the federal government, nor defer needed state action to the timetable set by federal leadership.

In another area of labor reform, I am proposing the enactment of a Maine Labor Relations Act, patterned after the National Labor Relations Act, which would establish the policy of collective bargaining in those areas of the private sector not covered by the national law.

Although the coverage of the national law is broad, there are important business activities within the State not subject to the law, but vulnerable to the disruptions of protracted labor-management disputes. The duty to bargain in good faith, incumbent upon both companies and employee representatives, is an indispensable requirement for the prompt and equitable resolution of such disputes.

Similarly, in the area of public employment, I support the efforts presently being made to develop a municipal labor relations act, which, while sensitive to the differences between public and private employment, requires municipalities to bargain collectively with their employees. Special provisions, as justified, should apply to negotiations involving professional groups such as teachers. Cities throughout the country have been plagued by labor strife. We in Maine must help to avoid such crises by granting municipal employees their just demand for collective bargaining rights.

As a final item of labor reform, I propose an act requiring a business to give its employees one month's notice before going out of business. The disruption in family life caused by such closings is enormous. Workers deserve some assurance that they will have an opportunity to find new jobs before losing their present income.

THE ELDERLY

For many years we have recognized the sad plight of elderly, retired citizens, living on small fixed incomes that are constantly eroded by rising property and sales taxes. I believe it is now time to act. Consequently, I have recommended in my budget funds for the enactment of legislation providing property tax relief for the elderly householder, 65 or over, with a household income up to \$3,000. Relief would be in the form of a rebate from the state directly to the property taxpayer. This arrangement, which does not diminish the local tax base, would also apply to the elderly who rent their homes and who feel the burden of the property tax through the increased rents charged by landlords. To appreciate the urgency of this legislation, we need only note that approximately 111,000 of our citizens are over 65.

Similarly, the income tax, if enacted, has a favorable impact on the limited incomes of the elderly. With the tax exempt status of social security benefits, and with several other special exemptions for the elderly, couples over 65 would have to have earned income of more than \$3,000 over and above other income before they would pay \$1.00 of income tax.

In another area of great concern, particularly in a society where longevity is the rule, I am proposing an improved retirement program for state employees, including teachers and other municipal employees who are members of the state system. Our present plan, based on one half of the employee's average compen-

sation for his highest five years of wages, assuming 35 years of service as a standard, is simply not competitive with programs offered in the private sector or in other states. The new retirement formula would be based on the average of the highest three years and would be reduced from 1/70 to 1/60, or a standard of 30 years service. The contributions made by state employees and teachers would increase from 5% of earnings to 6¼%. I have also proposed an \$80.00 per month minimum pension which would be paid entirely from state funds.

I am also suggesting consideration of the retroactive application of this plan for active and retired members of the system, if earnings from the retirement fund prove sufficient to pay the cost. As the result of reforms instituted by the 103rd Legislature, the funds of the retirement system have been invested by professional management to produce a greater return on the money of the system. If the new investment plan produces beyond original expectations, it might provide funds for some retroactive application. This possibility merits consideration.

Finally, with respect to programs for the elderly, the creation of a State Housing Authority will increase the availability of good, low income housing for our older citizens. Under the Housing Act of 1968 there are programs which communities can use to build this housing, if they can get expert assistance on program applications and planning. The State Housing Authority will provide this expert assistance. Also, the Housing Authority will be able to initiate and operate federally assisted housing programs for the elderly, such as leased housing with rent supplements. Such programs, however, would only be initiated with the consent of the locality where the housing would be located.

INDIANS

The Penobscot and Passamaquoddy Indian Tribes have justifiable pride in their capacity for self-government. They are, as an expression of this pride, continually seeking to improve the quality of their government operations. I support their proposal to place tribal police officers under the state personnel law, with its employee benefits and protection. Such a change would enable the reservations to employ qualified tribal members for these important positions.

To increase the flexibility of administration, the Tribes propose legislation allowing the tribal governor of each reservation, with the advice and consent of the tribal councils, to "appoint persons to such positions as tribal custodian, tribal maintenance man and other special officers not elsewhere specified." I support this measure.

The Penobscots, now required to hold their elections for governor, legislative representative, and tribal council every two years, propose changes allowing four year terms for the governor and tribal council members, with the council members having staggered terms to insure that there are always some experienced council members on hand. I endorse this proposal. The present system, permitting frequent, wholesale changes in government administration, may seriously threaten program continuity.

In the area of economic management, the Passamaquoddies propose changing the law on forestry income from Indian Township. The present law requires that all proceeds from the sale of timber must be placed in the Passamaquoddy trust funds until a sum equal to that used previously from the trust funds to build housing has been replaced. Given the present level of income from the timber sales, it will be 7 or 8 years before the sum is wholly replaced and proceeds are released for general reservation improvements. The Passamaquoddies feel this arrangement is too restrictive, and I agree. The law should be changed to allow transmittal of 40% of the net forestry income from the fiscal year to accounts of the Indian Township Tribal Council and the Pleasant Point Tribal Council

for uses the Councils deem appropriate. The remaining 20% of the annual net income would be returned to the trust fund. Under this arrangement the trust fund would still be replenished, though at a later date, while the Tribes would have money available for special projects, investments, or emergencies.

I have also recommended an extensive capital improvements program for the Indian Reservations. At Indian Island, Peter Dana Point and Pleasant Point Reservations there would be construction of indoor and outdoor recreation facilities and the extension of water and sewage facilities to accommodate new housing projects. At the Princeton Strip water and sewage facilities would be extended. At Pleasant Point four new classrooms would be constructed, and at Peter Dana Point, one. These projects all respond to basic, compelling needs which must be met.

In my Special Message on Education, I will discuss programs to improve the quality of Indian education.

CIVIL RIGHTS

Our present laws on discrimination in housing, employment and public accommodations are inadequate. To strengthen these laws and provide for more effective enforcement, I endorse the reforms advocated by the Task Force on Human Rights.

Within the financial means available to us, we can take an important first step by creating a seven-member Human Rights Commission with authority to investigate violations of civil rights laws and issue enforcement orders, subject to court review. We can change the emphasis of our laws from criminal sanctions for the individual who discriminates, an inappropriate remedy for this type of violation, to civil remedies for the victims of discrimination. We must expand our housing law to forbid discrimination in sales as well as rentals.

If we in Maine ever believed that our State has no civil rights problems, we were wrong. As the Task Force on Human Rights recently concluded:

“It would be unfair to our State to suggest that it is in some way worse in its attitude toward minority and disadvantaged groups, than the rest of the country. But honesty compels us to conclude that it is not distinctly better; . . . there are deeply ingrained attitudes of prejudice against these groups.”

It is true that racial and religious minorities comprise only a small, powerless part of our population. But in the area of civil rights, numbers and power are irrelevant. The basic issues are moral, and civil rights are personal rights, guaranteed by federal and state constitutions to every individual. Moreover, in any form or dimension, discrimination is an evil which intimidates the victim and corrupts the majority. Unchecked, it debases the quality of life for all.

MISCELLANEOUS

Finally, I wish to discuss a number of other diverse and important measures:

1. The Department of Mental Health and Corrections should be permitted to fund up to $\frac{3}{4}$ of the operating expenses of community mental health programs. The present $\frac{1}{2}$ limitation is unduly restrictive, particularly in an area where the availability of services is so crucial. Additional funds have been recommended for this grant-in-aid program (though this permissive legislation does not depend on such an increase).

2. In the Veteran's Assistance program, the five year residency requirement for veterans who did not enter the service from Maine or for their dependents should be abolished. The five year requirement imposes severe hardships for a

small number of families. Elimination of the requirement will ease those burdens while adding little to the expenses of the State. I have also recommended funds for the Department of Veterans Services which will provide for increases in World War assistance payments.

3. The Board of Visitors for our correctional institutions should be replaced by an Advisory Committee on Corrections, consisting of nine members appointed by the Governor. This committee would have responsibility for inspections of our correctional institutions, as well as other duties related to the broad purposes of the Bureau. Such a committee, with its capacity for comprehensive, objective evaluation of our correctional programs, will serve well to improve their quality. Similar advisory committees have been provided by law to work with the Bureau of Mental Health and the Bureau of Mental Retardation.

4. Highway construction, despite its relationship to economic progress, often creates hardships for people displaced from homes or businesses. I strongly support legislation drafted by the Highway Department which increases relocation payments and provides assistance to such people. Our material progress should not obscure our obligation to help those whose lives have been disrupted by this growth.

CONCLUSION

I have outlined many programs in this special message — welfare reform, labor legislation, Indian self-government, programs for the elderly, the mentally ill and mentally retarded, the physically handicapped, and the youthful and adult offender. Each program affects the well-being of a special group of people, and, as such, is important in itself. Viewed more broadly, these programs affect the well-being of us all. I present them for your most serious and sympathetic consideration.

KENNETH M. CURTIS
Governor of Maine

**SPECIAL MESSAGE OF GOVERNOR KENNETH M. CURTIS TO THE
ONE HUNDRED AND FOURTH LEGISLATURE**

July 2, 1969

This Legislative Session has been long.

I do not plan to prolong it.

You have met at a time when the State of Maine and states and municipalities all across this country have been faced with the most difficult problems of financing government in history.

As always, time and history will be the ultimate judge of the actions of this 104th Legislature.

However, at a time of great national growth, with rapidly diminishing resources, we can say now that significant conservation legislation has been enacted.

And, at a time the national spotlight is on youth, the legal age of voting and adulthood has been lowered.

Although, as always, there are matters left undone, certainly progress has been made.

Above all, it must be noted that the members of this Legislature have labored long and hard with great sacrifices to their families and private vocations.

The closing hours have been a most cooperative bipartisan effort to bring this session to a productive conclusion.

In the name of the People of Maine, let me thank you for your service.

And, until we meet in an all probable special session, I wish you and your families a pleasant summer.