To paraphrase John F. Kennedy in his inaugural address 30 years ago, it may not be finished in the first hundred days nor in the first thousand days, but let us begin because our accomplishments will be rewarding in the highest and best use of that word. Rewarding for the future of our children and our grandchildren, rewarding for the natural blessings of this land, and rewarding for those of us involved in a sense of inner peace and pride that comes with knowing that you worked diligently in pursuit of worthy ideas and ideals.

When the days get long and the going tough we will be well advised to remember the words of the Apostle Paul when he admonished us to run the race before us with courage looking always to the author of our faith. To that I would add, being always aware of the heritage given us by those who went before.

And on that note, I think this inauguration would be incomplete if we failed to give special recognition to the years of dedicated service rendered this State by my predecessor Lieutenant Governor Bill Hobby.

Governor Hobby, the constitutional awesomeness of the office I now assume is enhanced all the more by your legacy. I pray that I conduct the office with even a small measure of the high ideals that marked every moment you served.

In closing, to the people of Texas, Jan and I say from the bottom of our hearts that we love you and we hope that in the days ahead we will have your blessings and your prayers.

Thank you and God bless you.

Speaker Lewis then announced that the Constitutional Oath of Office would next be administered to Governor-elect Ann W. Richards by Chief Justice Thomas R. Phillips of the Supreme Court.

The Honorable Ann W. Richards then took the Constitutional Oath of Office and affixed thereto her signature, which was attested by Chief Justice Thomas R. Phillips.

Speaker Lewis then presented Her Excellency, The Honorable Ann W. Richards, Governor of Texas, who addressed the Joint Session as follows:

Welcome to the first day of the new Texas!

And welcome to the official representatives of thirty-five countries and the governors of the four Mexican border states who have joined us today.

I want to thank all of you for being with us. I hope we will see you often in the Capitol. We look forward to working cooperatively with your governments and to excellent relationships with your people.

Eighteen months ago, I stood with many of you a few hundred yards from here and announced my candidacy for governor of Texas.

If you were there—in fact or in spirit—on that hot June day . . . if you gave your time and your energy to the campaign . . . if you held your ground and continued to believe when the odds seemed long and the outcome uncertain . . . my gratitude to you is profound. God bless you.

Today is a day of celebration.

Today, we marched up Congress Avenue and we said that we were reclaiming the Capitol for the people of Texas.

We say proudly that the people of Texas are back.

That statement will be given meaning by our actions over the next four years.
Because today, the historians will record that a new administration, different from any in the past, began.

Twenty, fifty, one hundred years from now, school children will open their textbooks—or perhaps, switch on their video texts—and they will see a picture.

They will see us standing proudly on this bright winter noon. And looking through the eyes of a child we will seem as distant and as ancient as portraits of our ancestors seem to us.

Those children will read that on January 15th, 1991, a woman named Ann W. Richards took the oath of office as the 45th Governor of the State of Texas.

All of that is certain.

Today, the headline has been written . . . but the pages that follow are blank.

Tomorrow, we begin filling those pages . . . writing line by line the story that will be told long after the joy of this day is forgotten.

The Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., who was born on this day, said we have come this far on the strength of a dream.

Now our challenge is to transform that dream into reality . . . to fill the pages of history with the story of Texans who came into office envisioning a new era of greatness . . . and breathed life into that vision.

Today, we have a vision of a Texas where opportunity knows no race, no gender, no color—a glimpse of the possibilities that can be when the barriers fall and the doors, of government swing open.

Tomorrow, we have to build that Texas.

Today, we have a vision of a Texas with clean air and land and water . . . a Texas where a strong economy lives in harmony with a safe environment.

Tomorrow, we are going to begin to build that Texas.

Today, we have a vision of a Texas where every child receives an education that allows them to claim the full promise of their lives.

Tomorrow, we are going to build that Texas.

Today, we have a vision of a Texas where every citizen is treated by the government with respect and dignity and honesty . . . where consumers are protected . . . where business is nurtured and valued . . . where good jobs are plentiful . . . where those in need find compassion and love and help . . . where every decision is measured against a high standard of ethics and true commitment to the public trust.

Tomorrow, we've got to get about the business of building that Texas.

The people of Texas are back . . . and they are waiting and watching, anxious to see if their government can rise above personal interest, rancor and division . . . and get on with the business of building a Texas where the people come first.

Years ago, John Kennedy said that, “Life isn’t fair.”

Life is not fair . . . but government absolutely must be.

And if tomorrow, we begin with the understanding that government must stop telling people what they want . . . and start listening to the people and hearing what the people need, we will make government mean something in the lives of Texans.
Nothing is more fundamentally important to me than the understanding that this administration exists to serve the taxpayers.

Because service to the people is government's bottom line, we are creating a new position in the governor's office: a citizen's advocate who will cut red tape and bureaucratic stonewalling . . . who will report to me on those agencies who fail to meet the test of the highest quality of service, efficiency and financial management.

We are going to clean the government up and we are going to make it lean and responsive to the people it serves. Just get ready for it.

The oath I have taken today is mine . . . but the responsibility, the trust we have sought and been given belongs to all of us.

And I hope that as we invoke the blessing of God on this adventure, we will all ask, in the words of the old gospel song, that the Lord lift us to higher ground . . . and that we will be wise enough and strong enough to do what we have set out to do.

Because when my time in office is finished, I want us to be able to look back together and say we—not he, not she, not me—but WE came to this moment with a vision worthy of a great heritage . . . and WE realized that vision in a way that was worthy of a great future.

And as we turn the corner on a new millennium, I want us to be able to look forward . . . to see a small child with a textbook . . . thumbing through the pages . . . coming upon a picture of a group of people standing on the Capitol steps . . . looking out at that child across years and changes that we cannot even begin to imagine.

I want us to read words beneath that picture that say that on this date in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-one a new era began in Texas. And I want us to know that what we started here today will reach out across time to that child . . . and do us honor.

The Speaker presented Dr. Browning Ware, Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Austin, Texas, who delivered the benediction.

The Speaker announced that The University of Texas at Austin band would play the State song, "Texas, Our Texas."

On behalf of Governor Richards and Lieutenant Governor Bullock, Speaker Lewis invited all guests to attend the Inaugural Parade this afternoon at 3:00 p.m.

The Speaker then introduced a very distinguished guest, former First Lady of the United States, Mrs. Lady Bird Johnson.

MEMORIAL RESOLUTIONS


S.R. 25 - By Haley: In memory of Judge Royce C. Smith of Sabine County.

CONGRATULATORY RESOLUTIONS

S.R. 21 - By Sims: Extending congratulations to Mr. and Mrs. Arlie Bryant of Midland on their 50th wedding anniversary.

S.R. 22 - By Sims: Extending congratulations to Mr. and Mrs. Marable Martin of San Angelo on their 65th wedding anniversary.

S.R. 23 - By Sims: Extending congratulations to Mr. and Mrs. John F. Brasher of San Angelo on their 50th wedding anniversary.

S.R. 24 - By Sims: Extending congratulations to Mr. and Mrs. Harry Barina of San Angelo on their 50th wedding anniversary.