that the oath of office would be administered to the Honorable George W. Bush, Governor-elect of the State of Texas, by Chief Justice Phillips.

The Honorable George W. Bush took the constitutional oath of office as Governor of the State of Texas.

Speaker Laney introduced the Governor of Texas, the Honorable George W. Bush, to the joint session and the assemblage.

Governor Bush addressed the joint session and assemblage, speaking as follows:

Fellow Texans, Governor Bullock, Speaker Laney, my beloved family, and many friends. Thank you all for coming.

In this wonderful crowd, there are many special guests. I would like to especially recognize five: they are the governors of the Mexican states closest to Texas. Will you please help me welcome them? Their presence is a clear sign of the importance of the relationship between Texas and Mexico. Friends bring out the best in each other. May our friendship bring much good to both our countries.

I stand where others have stood before, in front of this magnificent Capitol. Moments ago, my hand was on Sam Houston's own Bible, simple and worn, that has consecrated the oath-taking of many other Texas governors.

Once again, all Texas witnesses the special moment when the people transfer the solemn responsibilities of the office of governor from one person to another.

My predecessor served our state well. The example she set gives heart to those who battle adversity and hope to those who wonder if opportunity is limited. Today, as Governor Richards leaves office, Texas owes her a debt of gratitude.

After the storm of the campaign, the transfer of authority from one governor to another happens in relative calm; so much so, that we run the risk of taking this special moment for granted. We must not. Our republican form of government only endures because Texans will its continued existence.

Though other Texas governors lived in much different times, faced different challenges, and spoke in their own way upon this platform on their Inaugural days, certain things are unchanged.

I share the sense of dedication that other new governors must have felt. Like them, I understand that I am responsible to all the people of Texas.

I share the excitement of those who have come to this job before me, their sense of purpose, and their eagerness to get on with the task ahead.

I share my predecessors' feelings of humility. The duties that I assume can best be met with the guidance of One greater than ourselves. I ask for God's help.

I share my predecessors' knowledge that progress is only possible with cooperation with the lieutenant governor, the speaker, and the legislative bodies they represent. I am eager to work with you, Governor Bullock and Speaker Laney. Our task is to serve the great people of Texas—to serve them well, and constantly, and unstintingly. Together, we will do that.

I share the energy of one newly scrutinized by Texas. During the campaign, I sought to let people know what was in my heart by speaking plainly and simply about my vision for our state's future. It was that philosophy and vision
which were endorsed in November.

After traveling our state seeking the vote, I have seen what those who held this office before me knew. Texas is a mighty land, full of loving and caring people. Texans dream big dreams and achieve those dreams when freed to do so.

As governor, I will call upon the best within every Texan as we confront our challenges, great tasks, and important missions.

Among the most important of these is restoring government to its proper role. A few moments ago, when I took the oath of office, I pledged to defend two Constitutions, those of the United States and of Texas. You expect me to honor that oath and I will. You expect me to heed the principles of those documents and I will.

As your governor, I will start by defending our forefathers' intelligence in defining separate roles for our federal and state governments. That wisdom was expressed in the Bill of Rights' 10th Amendment, which gives to the states all powers not specifically granted to the federal government. The spirit of that Amendment has been forgotten in recent decades. I pledge to you, it will be forgotten no more.

As governor, I will use every resource at my disposal to make the federal government in Washington heed this simple truth: Texans can run Texas. As we ask Washington to return to Texas the power to innovate, to set our own course, to direct our own lives, we must also be consistent at home. If we trust Texans to make the best decisions for Texas—and we do—we must also trust Texans to make the best decisions for their local schools and local communities. My guiding principle will be government if necessary, but not necessarily government.

By trusting Texans, the state is more likely to focus on its principal responsibilities: good and safe streets, excellent schools, help for those who cannot help themselves, and respect for private property.

By trusting Texans, we free them to succeed. I recognize that by doing so, we run the risk that sometimes, some of them will fail. But mistakes made closest to the people are those most easily corrected.

I also recognize freedom without responsibility is simply license. For the last thirty years, our culture has steadily replaced personal responsibility with collective guilt. This must end. The new freedom Texas seeks must be matched with renewed personal responsibility. The very future of our society depends on it.

Responsibility starts at home. It starts with responsible families. I wish I knew the law that would cause people to love each other. I do not. But I do know our laws must be written to strengthen families, not diminish them. Every piece of legislation that crosses my desk will be judged by whether it keeps families together, safe, and strong.

If we are to save a generation of young people, our juvenile and criminal laws must hold people responsible for what they do. Discipline and love go hand in hand. If we want young Texans to learn to make correct choices, the consequences of bad behavior must be certain and clear.

If we are to end dependency on government, we must change the welfare system. Often, the present system diminishes personal responsibility and rewards illegitimacy. For too many of the able-bodied, it says you cannot succeed. This is not the Texas way.

If we are to prepare our children for their exciting future, our education
laws must place the power over our schools in the hands of our local communities and citizens. We must empower teachers, administrators, school boards, and parents to design the schools that best fit their community's needs. Texas must set high standards for our schools, free local districts to innovate, and hold educators responsible for results.

Texans understand governors and government do not create prosperity. Producers, inventors, and entrepreneurs do. What government does is create an environment in which people are willing to take economic risks that create jobs. There are many ways for a business to fail. We must not allow one of them to be a frivolous lawsuit. So that every small business person in Texas has a better chance to succeed, Texas must end the junk lawsuits that clog our courts and threaten our producers. Doing so will expand our job base so anyone who wants a job can find one.

Texas is ready for government that works. Texans know the more government tries to do, the less it accomplishes. Texans want government to concentrate on a few critical areas and do them well. Most of all, Texans desire for ourselves and coming generations the liberty to dare, to risk, and to succeed.

This is our mission. It is clear and bold. We must make Texas a beacon state. It is within the power of every Texan, working together, to mold a bright future. I ask for your help, your commitment, and your prayers for the work ahead.

I feel the wind at our backs. My enthusiasm for our mission is exceeded only by my confidence that we can succeed. And when we do, those who feel left behind will have new hope, those who have grown cynical will begin to care, and our children will grow up in a more prosperous and more peaceful state.

The history of our special land tells us this: that what Texans can dream, Texans can do. To be your governor is an unimaginable honor. Thank you for your confidence in me and God bless Texas.

At the conclusion of the governor's address, Speaker Laney presented Father Dave Penticuff, retired Episcopal priest, who pronounced the benediction.

Speaker Laney presented The University of Texas Longhorn Band, which played "Texas Our Texas."

Speaker Laney extended an invitation, on behalf of Governor Bush and Lieutenant Governor Bullock, to all guests to view the parade this afternoon.

SENATE RECESSES

President Pro Tempore Barrientos stated that the purpose for which this joint session was convened having been completed, the senate would, in accordance with a previous motion, stand recessed until 2 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Speaker Laney stated that the purpose for which the joint session was convened had been completed. In accordance with a previous motion, the house, at 12:41 p.m., adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow.